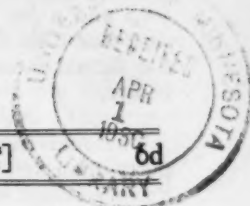


# THE SATURDAY REVIEW

No. 3881. Vol. 149.

15 March 1930

REGISTERED AS  
A NEWSPAPER



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**SUBSCRIPTION RATES.**—The Subscription to the SATURDAY REVIEW is 30s. per annum, post free. Cheques should be sent to the publisher at the above address. The paper is despatched in time to reach Subscribers by the first post every Saturday.

## NOTES OF THE WEEK

THE Government was defeated this week in the House of Commons by the Conservatives, who for once in a way turned up in something like full force. But there was little importance in the division, and it was known in advance that Mr. MacDonald would not resign except on a vital matter or a direct vote of confidence. Apart from Parliamentary business it would, in fact, have been inconvenient to everybody had he done so. The French Government having been out of action for a fortnight at the Naval Conference, it is not for the British to follow suit.

From the point of view of public advantage as distinct from party tactics, it is expedient that the Government remain in office for the present. None of the three parties really wants a General Election for the time being, and even if such a thing were unavoidable, it would be excessively inconvenient for a new Ministry to take office before the Budget. Mr. Snowden and his friends have created the situation; it is for them to deal with it.

When Mr. Thomas talks of the Government being in office for several years longer, of course he is joking in his after-dinner manner. When people gossip in clubs of the probability of an immediate General Election, they are talking through their hat. The Ministry is probably fairly safe until the end of the session or the year, hardly longer; but one decisive factor for or against survival is likely to be the internal position of the Liberal Party.

If the Liberals keep the Government in office too long, they will find the ordinary common-sense voter in the constituencies ask them why they do not call themselves Labour men and have done with it. Support for a few months can be justified, support that looks like being permanent cannot. Those Liberals who lost their seats in 1924 from the same cause will have painful recollections of the ensuing inquest by their constituents.

The Rothermere-Beaverbrook split, following hard upon the Beaverbrook-Baldwin armistice, has given the ordinary good Conservative a headache;

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there are too many Richmonds in the field, and they are all going in different directions, and neither candidates nor local associations know what to say when they speak with the enemy in the gate. One cannot help sympathizing with the straight party man who wants a strong lead and no nonsense, and who feels there is no leadership and a lot of nonsense about; but when the dust has died down a little, it will be found that the actual position is better, not worse, than before.

The real trouble last year was that the good party man felt he was not being led at all; the hungry sheep looked up and were not fed. They asked for a policy, and received instead essays on character. The Empire Crusade at least provided a policy; and my impression is that many people supported it simply because it was a policy, and whether right or wrong, gave them a banner to rally to. They made mental reservations on this point or that, but at least it was an ideal they could rally to.

When Mr. Baldwin, after some obvious hesitation, accepted the Beaverbrook policy, there was a sense of relief, for almost anything was better than a party split. But the relief was followed by a cold fit, for I have yet to meet the man who believes in the referendum. The doubts under this head amount to this, that if the Beaverbrook policy is to be watered down to the mixture as before, then we are no better off.

The Rothermere split is of less consequence, and for a simple reason. The talk about Press dictatorship is, of course, pure bunkum; this country is not governed by its newspaper owners. Lord Beaverbrook's strength was that he went to the House of Lords as well as Shoe Lane, and having spoken there went up and down the country making speeches. A man who faces the people from the platform and risks rotten eggs and other forms of political argument always gets a hearing and usually gets a following. A man who does not is not taken seriously as a political force.

Now Lord Rothermere, no doubt for excellent reasons, has done none of these things. He is a member of the House of Lords, but he has not spoken there. He could easily get invitations to address meetings, but if they have been made, he has not accepted them. Perhaps he is too busy, or does not like public speaking; I simply do not know. But this I do know: that unless he faces the public and risks the rotten eggs, he is simply wasting his time. Lord Beaverbrook asked people to follow a man, and they did. Lord Rothermere asks people to follow a newspaper, and they won't.

When the *Daily Mail* followed the *Daily Express* in the Empire Campaign, I was doubtful whether its support was an asset or a liability. A very few days showed it was a liability; the tail did not fit the dog, and it wagged at the wrong moment. Moreover, Lord Beaverbrook told us exactly what he thought, and obviously believed it. Lord Rothermere only told us what his secretariat thought, and what these excellent employees

thought did not matter. You may follow a man, or oppose a man; the only thing you can do with an anonymous committee is to ignore it.

The main point about open diplomacy is that it is more secret than the old secret diplomacy; and the main point about a disarmament conference is that nobody talks about disarmament. On the other hand, every "responsible statesman" is talking about humanizing war, which everybody knows to be certainly nonsense, and probably humbug. A year ago they all were talking of the Kellogg Pact giving security; now the cant formula is a Mediterranean Locarno.

They might just as well say Abracadabra in chorus; these things are meaningless words, smokescreens which conceal the real aims and motives of rival Powers. Democracy is easily gullible, but in the present case it is not so much gulled as gorged with a surfeit of words which mean nothing, are intended to mean nothing, and recognized to mean nothing. What is happening to naval armaments nobody knows, but the credit of the statesmen engaged at the London Conference is rapidly falling.

Had the delegates at the Conference meant business, a ten per cent. cut in naval estimates all round would have been a possible approach; or if that simple method was found to be too difficult, a five years' naval holiday might have been considered. Presumably every Fleet ages and becomes obsolescent at the same rate, and therefore nobody would have had any advantage over anybody else.

These elementary principles having been rejected, the Naval Conference has got lost in a fog of its own making. I remember being told a year ago that once a Labour Government was in power, it would settle this naval question much better than the incompetent Mr. Bridgeman. The mild scepticism I expressed on that occasion appears to have been more than justified. It is not specially the fault of the Labour Government; it is simply that everybody has been saying one thing and meaning another. It looks as though the best thing that could be done would be for the Naval Conference to adjourn to this day twelve months.

The Government continues to blunder in the matter of the Russian religious persecution, and Mr. Henderson's confusion when he is questioned suggests that his heart is at odds with his head. That, no doubt, is creditable to him as a Christian—he is a man of undoubted piety who has more than once occupied the pulpit with effect—but it is inconvenient in a Foreign Secretary. He should either have adopted a strict attitude of non-intervention or have protested vigorously at Moscow.

He could, at a pinch, have made the best of both worlds by giving the House a dispassionate survey of the evidence he has received, stating that he personally regretted the attitude the Russian Government had taken up, but that it was not consistent with the British Government's general

policy to protest or make representations at Moscow. That might not have satisfied the religious world or his political opponents, but it would have been a comprehensible attitude, and it would have been difficult to criticize.

At is it, he has simply executed an embarrassed shuffle which has annoyed both friend and foe. There is a strong and sincere desire to know the facts, apart from any question of party. Mr. Henderson is the one man in a position to know the facts, and he refuses to tell them. Can he wonder that the many religious men in the Labour camp are as disturbed as the men on the Opposition side of the House, whose motives he naturally suspects?

I find that Anglicans and Catholics alike are alarmed at the possibility of a whole nation growing up in a state of Atheism. I respect their fears; but at the risk of misunderstanding, I confess that I do not entirely share these apprehensions. Heaven forbid that one should minimize the effect of shutting up the churches, but it seems to me quite impossible to extirpate the religion that every child learns at its mother's knee. As the Soviet cannot very well abolish mothers, it can only drive religion under ground.

The idea of an Anti-God Union, which strikes so many people as horrible, seems to me to have a comic side. The Almighty could, no doubt, abolish man in the twinkling of an eye. It is more difficult to see how man can abolish the Almighty. Even a decree of the Soviet does not change the facts of the world; and since men in every age have agreed that God exists, it is quite ridiculous to suppose that the fiat of Moscow will alter this conviction. Men can, and do, dispute as to the nature of the Godhead; they are never likely to give up their fundamental belief in the existence of God.

The Parliamentary Committee which is discussing the question of capital punishment is unlikely to recommend the abolition of the death penalty. The weight of evidence seems definitely in favour of its retention, and the witnesses are obviously convinced that if imprisonment were substituted for hanging, the number of murders would increase. On that point, at least, the testimony seems conclusive.

That is not, however, quite the whole question at issue. The thing that differentiates capital punishment from any other penalty is that it is irrevocable; what one really wants to know, therefore, is whether there is any evidence of innocent men having been executed. It does not interest me in the least to know that hanging is painless; it may be as enjoyable as having an aching tooth out, for all I care—the relevant consideration is that from its very nature it is a one-act performance. I hope, then, that the Committee will direct its serious attention to this matter.

If it is really intended, as indications in the daily papers suggest, to make a strict research into the matter of who "came over with the Conqueror," the results will probably be both surprising and interesting. Two or three families in the country may be able to trace their descent

on the Norman side direct from the Battle of Hastings; hardly more, I should imagine. Two or three still older families can show that they were settled here before the Conqueror; but I doubt if these are a dozen of both kinds whose genealogical trees would survive investigation of every link of the twenty-five or so generations.

Apart from sentimental interest, of course, the enquiry can have no importance; for it would need a good deal of simple faith to believe that anybody has pure Norman blood to-day. There may possibly be a few pure Saxons or Danes—more likely in the Highlands, one imagines, than in England—but pure Norman descent is almost impossible. Nor is it in fact desirable, for apart from family pride, it is generally agreed that a mixture of stock produces better results than inbreeding in too small a circle.

It is sad to see the continual destruction of woods and timber in the belt that runs twenty or thirty miles round London, through Surrey, Kent, and Essex; and the deplorable squat bungalows along the new main roads deserve most of the abuse levelled at them by the artists. Even worse in a way is the prospect that this process will be extended indefinitely; almost every country estate I passed this week on a run out to town to the south, had its "eligible building site" up. Surrey at least is becoming one vast dormitory suburb.

But there are indications that the process of urban extension may slacken down in a few years. Everything shows that population is gravitating towards a stationary level, and in a decade or so, according to the statisticians, births and deaths will about balance. Every return of the Registrar-General shows a nearer approach to that equilibrium; and in that case Outer London can hardly continue to swallow quiet villages wholesale, in the manner of the last century. The builders may suffer, but the country as a whole will probably gain—and London, too, in the end. Civilization seems to have come to a bedraggled end on its outskirts.

President Taft started life as a reporter and ended as a judge of the Supreme Court. Perhaps the least satisfactory portion of his life, at least to himself, was his Presidency; for he was not as great a statesman as lawyer. The chief memory one has of him was not so much the nobility of his character, which was more or less taken for granted, as of his conspicuous charm of personality, which won him friends all over the world. And the friends he made he kept.

Marie Studholme was little more than a name to the present generation of playgoers, who have already forgotten Isabel Jay and other lights of the early years of the century. The fashion has changed, on the whole not for the worse, since the days of Gabrielle Ray and Lily Elsie, and the standard of acting is perhaps rather higher now than then. Marie Studholme was never a great actress, but she remains as a gracious memory of a beautiful woman whose smile was famous the world over, and whose kindness of heart was not forgotten even when her acting days were over.



## MR. THOMAS'S FAILURE

IT is not altogether unusual for the trumpet of the Liberal headquarters to be sounded with no certain note, but we must confess to surprise at a transition of more than Wagnerian abruptness. Our week-end was enlivened by the news that the Ministry's honeymoon, prolonged for international reasons beyond the conventional term, was at last to be brought to an end, and that the Liberal Party was prepared to follow its leader even into the division lobby. The fateful Monday came and Mr. Lloyd George, having breathed defiance, gave us "Wait till the Clouds Roll by" with statistical obligato. The occasion provided Mr. Thomas with an opportunity, of which that skilled debater took full advantage, of delivering the standard official speech, and, save for the loss of a Parliamentary day, everything is as it was before.

The position lends itself to obvious comment from Conservatives whose electoral sores are still smarting. We forbear to make it. The gravest economic issue which has confronted the nation since Peel's day calls for other criticism than a partisan retort. We are by no means without sympathy for Mr. Thomas. The luck has been against him. The fall in the price of silver, the collapse of the American boom, the Hatry smash, and the presence of an embittered doctrinaire at the Exchequer, are handicaps against which any Minister, whatever his political colour, might struggle in vain. Nor do we forget that it was not Mr. Thomas's party which undertook to reduce employment to the normal within a limited time. But we are bound to remember that Labour fought the last election on unemployment, declaring in substance that the situation must no longer be allowed to drift. The special functions attached to Mr. Thomas's office, to say nothing of the special assistance of a party veteran on his right hand and a youthful hero on his left, were taken as promises of energetic action. Our complaint is that these promises have not been fulfilled and that the situation has drifted and is still drifting.

Apart from encouraging local authorities to spend money—work which might be accomplished by any bureaucrat too obscure for the Treasury to notice—Mr. Thomas's main effort has lain in soothing the economic alarm created by the formation of the Government of which he is a member. In this field he has succeeded. He has convinced both finance and industry that, at any rate, so long as it does not command a majority, Labour's bark is worse than its bite. To this praiseworthy end he has held conferences and delivered speeches, and has in consequence had no leisure for administrative work.

Here, as we see it, lies the root of the trouble. Administration cannot of itself conquer unemployment, but it can make employment conquerable by enabling it to be attacked in detail. In this matter we have experience to guide us. Twenty-five years ago, when the present economic clouds first began to gather, it was observed that the Poor Law was inadequate to the nation's need. Pauperism, it was contended, could not be attacked because it could not be defined, and it could not be defined because every variety of

it was huddled pell-mell into the general mixed workhouses. The break-up of the Poor Law, declared the report in language which time has justified, was the essential preliminary to the reduction of poverty. We venture to say that the break-up of the Employment Exchanges is no less essential to the reduction of unemployment.

Consider the names on the books of any Exchange to-day. One main division is immediately apparent. Workers temporarily out of a job, men and women who would certainly be absorbed again into their respective trades even if there were no Government employment agency, figure side by side with workers to whom the future appears to hold out no prospect whatever. There are workers whose industry has collapsed, workers whose livelihood has failed through the weakness of the industry on which they indirectly depended, workers whose perhaps remediable inefficiency has proved fatal in these hard times, workers thrown out of blind-alley occupations as soon as they reach the insurable age. With this last group the new Insurance Act has made some effort to deal. The rest are left higgledy-piggledy on the books.

It has become the fashion to speak of the army of unemployed. Mob would be a better term, and a mob is naturally unmanageable. What we need, as the prelude to betterment, is classification. We are all of us willing to do what we can. But what can we do in the face of a mob over a million strong? Break up the unemployment problem and the situation will change. We shall find that there is a separate problem for every branch of every industry and for every place in which any branch of any industry is carried on. By this treatment the mob will, indeed, become an army, organized into manageable units, and everyone who is himself in employment and, therefore, in some condition to influence the employment of others, will know just what task confronts him in his own little corner of the economic system.

The late Government made a beginning with this essential work of classification. It established the principles of transfer and training, neither of which can be applied without selection, which is, of course, only another name for classification. The possibilities of these principles have not been explored, and Mr. Thomas has given himself no time to explore them.

The situation is the more urgent because Mr. Thomas has himself given some impulse to the work of industrial rationalization. Whatever rationalization may mean in the long run—and we have no doubt that it means prosperity—it must involve an increase of unemployment in the immediate future. So much follows from the fact that the purpose of rationalization is economy, in labour no less than in capital. It is folly to imagine that this labour will be absorbed indiscriminately by new public works, worse folly still to load industry in the process of reconstruction with an enormous burden of increased pensions, and worst folly of all to stimulate consumption in the present by depriving it of the capital to which it looks for its future. Real hope lies in the systematic application of transfer and training, and it is because Mr. Thomas has neglected this vital administrative aspect of his work that he can fairly be said to have failed.



## HAS MR. BALDWIN GIVEN TOO MUCH?

NOW that the first excitement over the recent crisis in the Conservative Party has subsided, it is possible to review the Baldwin-Beaverbrook reunion in a calmer atmosphere. The attitude of the Liberals and of Labour to that event is simple and illogical. In one breath they cry that the Press Lords have capitulated to Mr. Baldwin and that Mr. Baldwin has surrendered to the Food-Tax Press-gang. It is a grotesque attempt to have the best of both worlds, and, as such, requires no comment. In Conservative circles, however, opinion is by no means unanimous. The first rejoicings over the avoidance of a dangerous split are giving way to more sober reflections, and thoughtful Unionists are asking themselves what will be the ultimate effect of Mr. Baldwin's latest concession on the future fortunes of their party. There is no longer any satisfaction in the official view, propounded by the Central Office, that at the expense of a trifling surrender—a surrender which it claimed was not a surrender at all—Mr. Baldwin has silenced and separated his two troublesome Press magnates, and even in Conservative circles, which are by no means favourable to Lord Beaverbrook, there is a growing tendency to ask: "Has Mr. Baldwin conceded too much?"

It is a penetrating question which will perturb even the most far-seeing mind. On first reflections one is tempted to answer it with a decided No. From the point of view of that hesitating policy, which he has always favoured, Mr. Baldwin has reunited his party at a cost which, at first sight, seems very small. In accepting the referendum proposals, suggested to him by Lord Beaverbrook, he has not even alienated the Free Importers in his own party, for, as they have already pointed out, a large number of "ifs" have to be fulfilled before a referendum on a tax on foreign foodstuffs can ever be put before the voters, much less be accepted by them.

Maturer considerations prove that Mr. Baldwin's position is by no means so comfortable as his apologists would have us believe. Quite apart from the probability that both Liberals and Labour will make the food-tax question the real issue of the next election, there is another factor in the political situation which makes that probability a certainty. Mr. Baldwin has an ally who is pledged to a policy of Empire Economic Unity, not in some remote Utopian future, but within our time. That ally is, of course, Lord Beaverbrook, who has demonstrated over and over again to the complete conviction of ninety per cent. of the Conservative Party, including, be it said, Mr. Baldwin himself, that without a tax on foreign foodstuffs the whole fabric of Empire Economic Unity falls to the ground. No sentiment can seal a one-sided bargain, and any scheme of inter-Imperial trade, which seeks an outlet for British manufactured goods in the Dominions, at the same time precluding a sheltered market for Dominion agricultural products in this country, is doomed to failure.

To-day Lord Beaverbrook is inside the Conservative Party. In that position he will have the open and enthusiastic support of that large

body of Conservatives which agrees with his views on Empire Economic Unity, but which was repelled by his formation of a new party. We trust that on this occasion Mr. Baldwin means business, that he will take heart from the encouragement he has received, and that he will realize the folly of trying to dodge the food-tax issue at the next election. If he does not adopt this course—above all, if he yields to the timid counsellors in his own party—he is certain to find Lord Beaverbrook even more embarrassing as an ally than he was as an opponent.

There is, moreover, in Mr. Baldwin's position another weakness which complacent Conservatives, who profess to believe in his complete triumph, would do well to consider. There is Lord Rothermere, who, having maintained his independence, is now free to gather round him all those malcontents who were first attracted by Lord Beaverbrook's programme and whose main grievance is against the ineptitude of the existing political leaders. Seldom in the history of this country has discontent with the professional politician been so strong as at the present moment.

It is true that the two Press Lords have now gone different ways. It is true, too, that Lord Beaverbrook is a consistent politician, whereas Lord Rothermere has often changed his mind. It is likewise true that, apart from the question of Empire Economic Unity, their political views differ in many important respects. Lord Beaverbrook is at heart a Liberal. He believes in every man having his chance. His sympathies are with the under-dog, in so far as he is kept under by the abuses and inequalities of our social system. Lord Rothermere belongs to another school. He stands for a hundred per cent. Conservative individualism, and in his desire for strong-man government his outlook has a close affinity with Fascism.

Perhaps this contrast in the political make-up of the two men is due to their different upbringing. Lord Beaverbrook is a son of the people and proud of the fact. Lord Rothermere's life has been passed in more sheltered surroundings. Be this as it may, the difference exists, and those Conservatives who prefer rash conclusions to hard thinking are congratulating Mr. Baldwin on his adroitness in having driven a wedge between the two peers. Already they see a secured future with Lord Rothermere in the wilderness and Lord Beaverbrook chained to the Conservative chariot. In their magnanimity they are even prepared, if he is a good boy, to let him hold the end of the driver's reins.

We can conceive no greater error than this assumption that the Press Lords have been rendered innocuous. In his account of his negotiations with Mr. Baldwin, Lord Beaverbrook made it perfectly clear that on all questions at issue between the two men Lord Rothermere was also consulted. Mr. Baldwin's concessions to Lord Beaverbrook, his pledges about the Dominion Conference and the policy of Empire Free Trade, were also concessions and pledges to Lord Rothermere. Lord Beaverbrook's pact with Mr. Baldwin on this one issue of Empire Free Trade was also subscribed to by Lord Rothermere, and, as long as Mr. Baldwin shows his determination to carry out that pact both in the letter and in the spirit,

he cannot be attacked by Lord Rothermere on this particular issue.

If, however, Mr. Baldwin should fear his fate too much, if by vague lip-service to the referendum he should seek to side-track the policy of Empire Economic Unity and to remove it from its proper position as the main plank in the Conservative programme, nothing is more certain than that he will find himself exposed to the strongest possible pressure from Lord Beaverbrook and his supporters inside the party, and to the severest flank attack by Lord Rothermere from outside.

We think it advisable to accentuate these aspects of the present situation, because further misunderstandings can only lead to further dissensions and to further and perhaps more dangerous splits. As we see it, Mr. Baldwin's own position is strong so long as he himself remains strong. The weakness of his own position is his own weakness. What the country is crying for to-day, what ninety per cent. of the Conservatives outside of Westminster are longing for, is a constructive policy of courage and action. Never has there been a time more favourable for the reception of such a policy. Never has an idea so fired the imagination of the electorate as the idea of Empire Free Trade. But the opportunity must be grasped, the policy must be formulated and advocated in the constituencies with a wholehearted unanimity, the question of the tax on foreign foodstuffs must be boldly faced, and, above all, the ranks must be closed, even if necessary to the exclusion of the timorous and the faint-hearted. It is not, as these gentlemen seem to think, a question of has Mr. Baldwin given too much, but will Mr. Baldwin meet the bill he has already given?

## GANDHI AND HIS MISSION

BY SIRDAR IKBAL ALI SHAH

THE father of Indian agitation is singularly unfortunate in having been born between two ages; the one of hopeful probabilities a century ago, the other of definite actualities a hundred years hence.

If he had preached his gospel in the days of John Company, when English clerks of merchant Princes, squatting on carpeted floors, shared pipes with the natives, and even wrote poetry in the language of the Hindus, Gandhi's mission might have been assured of an instant success. The India of those days retained at least some colour of the past; even the townsmen could still tell the time by looking at the stars; the economic forces of the West had but touched the fringes of the Indian seas. Then, Gandhi's preaching would have earned him a throne.

A hundred years hence men's fingers may have lost the touch of the sword; the materialistic tendencies that grip the imagination to-day, having clashed among themselves, might also disappear. Then the doctrine of non-violent agitation in India might be fruitful. It is just this disparity of conditions which threatens Gandhi's mission with utter failure, for he is not of our own days.

Yet with the possible exception of Lenin, he has made more noise in the world than any other man of our time. His quiet whispers from the limpid waters of the holy Sabarmatu have been magnified to a roar of thunder even beyond the Indian Ocean. But though I view his political creed with despair, be it said that

it is almost exclusively the work of curious students of world politics, in addition to a few of his ardent admirers, that has brought this mysterious man into the limelight. The high pedestal on which he stands was not his own seeking: for the least that can be said about him is that he is a mystic who wishes to reform where men's souls give little response to the craving of his heart. Hence the tragedy to which he is unwittingly driving his countrymen.

If Gandhi's weapons are the power of his soul, so that he takes to fasting at the slightest provocation—as he recently did when the mill owners and workers could not agree—and styles the present Government in India Satanic, he is operating in a wrong field. Holy men have always commanded allegiance in the East, and in the guise of an ascetic Gandhi launched his anti-British propaganda of non-co-operation with a necessary clause that that resentment of the people must never manifest any physical force. But the result was disastrous. Post-war irritation caught the imagination of youth, blood was freely shed, and as a consequence Gandhi fasted.

The important fact to remember is that the Indian National Congress, which gave the complete dictatorship to Gandhi only a few months ago, first met as long ago as 1885, since when Dayanand, Ramkrishna and Vinayak and, lastly, Tilak have all held that the salvation of the people lay in a return to the past. But though Gandhi has repeated the message, he had the wisdom not too frequently to allude to the Hindu culture of Asoka, or what Tilak worshipped in Sivaji, from the fear of estranging the sentiments of the Muslims in India.

For twenty years Gandhi worked to ameliorate the conditions of Indians in South Africa, practised non-violent non-co-operation, and won the field there; but Indian conditions have no parallel in South Africa. There, with a few colonists, you could present a united front, but not so in a country of about the size of Europe and with a population exceeding 300,000,000, speaking two hundred and twenty-two languages, and where only eighty-two in every thousand can read or write; with differing cultures, traditions, social customs and conflicting economic interests.

In further justification of the sincerity of the purpose of this paradoxical man, it has been said that he was so surcharged with his scheme that he even set himself to forget these differences. History can have only one verdict for this lack of thought. Again and again Gandhi rose and fell in public esteem. He brought about a union of the Hindus and Muslims, but that proved a mere patchwork and no real opening of hearts. The Muslims fell in the lap of agitation because they feared that Great Britain was hostile to Islam, and as soon as England showed that no such sentiments actuated her, Gandhi's spell was broken, despite the agitation of professional politicians like the notorious Ali Brothers.

Another objection to which Gandhi's adherents have found no answer is that even if the Satanic Government of the Englishman were thrown out of the country, what administrative machinery is to replace it? Is it to be a system of Parliamentary Government, or the village Panchayat of long ago? How are the Muslim interests to be safeguarded, how are the Indian Princes to fit their self-sufficient States into a liberated India, how are the thousands of untouchables to be rescued; in short, what element can bind India to-day? "Go back to the Vedas, to ancient India for a peaceful unexploiting government," is the battle-cry. But it is conveniently forgotten that whether India likes it or not she is now in the vortex of world-economics, the industrialization of the West is sweeping over the East, even the land-locked country of the Afghans has trembled before its advance; yet the stalwart old Indian nationalist sings with Gandhi: "We do not wish Parliamentary or any other institutions imposed upon us."



He shouts, "We wish to evolve our own institution in harmony with our national history." You ask what national history, and remain unanswered.

And true it is that the average peasant in India—never forget that he alone is the true representative of his country, India being agricultural—even to-day very largely resembles the classical man whose conception of *patria* scarcely went beyond the outermost fields that surround his village. It was the maturing of the classical world, if you like so to call it, that broke the barriers of geographical limitation; and so the Persians, the Christians and even the Arabs burst forth upon newer grounds: but in our own day we agree to define nationality in terms not of the present, but of the historic past. Our future destiny is conditioned by affinities of race, and traditions of religion and speech. This conception was decisive in the dividing up of the late Austrian Empire; it was this that impelled the Afghans to fight for their independence; it was this that persuaded the Angora Assembly to waive Turkish claims in 1920 to Arabia.

Occasionally Gandhi descends from the mystic clouds to these realities of practical politics, and, realizing the hopelessness of the media in which he has chosen to work, retires into oblivion as he did after the Bardoli. Then again he appears to play the same tune. His followers, realizing the wrong logic of the case, leave the sinking barge and are branded as cowards by the agitators, but nevertheless they are good judges of a sinking ship.

Borne on the wings of discontent, the movement seemed at one time to crown this prince of political excitement. But it was for a time only; the people, not the Government, defeated it by sheer force of the fact that its creed is of other days, and does not ring true to the Indian conditions.

The latest endeavour of Gandhi to defy the law is not a new move, but merely another march in a losing battle. It cannot, of course, be doubted that the entire machinery of the Indian Congress is at the back of the chief actor, but it has obviously taken action in a great haste. It does not stop to argue, it moves on to the precipice, afraid of the first symptoms of old age before it has spent its youth.

## THE CHURCH SETTLES DOWN

BY THE REV. J. C. HARDWICK

THE Prayer Book fiasco was highly regrettable if only because it raised the question of the relations of Church and State, and created a demand for their clearer definition, and, perhaps, for their reform. To many this may have seemed a good thing, but relations between parties are not always most amicable when they are most carefully defined. Along with definitions, *amour-propre* often enters; and when our rights and privileges have been tabulated we begin to wonder whether we are not being defrauded of our due. And with regard to reform, everyone knows how dangerous it is to meddle with things that have stood for a long time without much interference. You may very easily do more harm than good by upsetting a balance of forces which may have taken centuries to reach equilibrium. Reformers turn out to be jerry-builders quite as often as genuine reconstructors. That this has been so in the case of those who engineered the Enabling Act of 1919 is now quite obvious to everybody.

These agitators thought that something was wrong with the relations of Church and State, and devised an ill-considered measure to put them right. Their machinery ran for approximately ten years and landed us in the Prayer Book imbroglio, which was aggra-

vated by partisan feeling generated by the controversy involved. And the Prayer Book business has now raised the Church and State problem in a form which we cannot avoid facing.

However, doubts and regrets avail little. We have to face the situation; and perhaps it would have developed sooner or later even if the Life and Liberty zealots had held their peace. (Though later, rather than sooner, is always the thing to pray for in a controversy of this kind.)

On the whole, it must be admitted that the bishops took their double rebuff very well; that is to say, they did not lose their heads and let themselves to be rushed by their extremist supporters into any "heroic," and therefore disastrous, policy. They talked a trifle loosely about the independence of a spiritual society, and so on; but they did not formulate any defiant measures of *revanche*. After a few protests, in the course of which the adjective "outrageous" was a little overworked, the bishops did the wisest thing—they resolved to think things over.

It is true that one of their number, and by no means the least distinguished, has bluntly and openly declared himself in favour of disestablishment. The Bishop of Durham demands that the painter be cut; and he demands it in the interests of discipline. A self-governing Church can enforce order upon its clergy and discipline upon its laity, as a State-embarrassed Church cannot do. At present, lawbreakers laugh at authority, and when their illegal practices are forbidden, carry on as before.

Dr. Henson, however, has not carried the rest of the Bench with him; at least, not at present. His colleagues have devised an interim policy which, considering the difficulties of the position in which they are placed, has much to recommend it. This policy has consisted of two parts. First, the two Archbishops issued an appeal to the Church at large (but more especially aimed at the clergy) to meet for systematic study and devotion. The hope which inspired this manifesto was that the fever of party spirit would abate if the contending partisans could be got to understand one another and the problems which divided them. Education gradually dissipates prejudice, and rational intercourse promotes good will.

The second part of the episcopal policy was contained in a resolution moved by the Primate in the Church Assembly early in February, and there carried, that a Commission should be appointed to enquire into the present relations of Church and State. Although serious misgivings were felt as to the wisdom of openly raising this most difficult issue, two circumstances may justify us in regarding this stroke of policy with a certain amount of equanimity. In the first place Dr. Lang is reported as saying: "The motion was in no sort of way a movement towards disestablishment. He certainly shared what he believed to be the feeling of the bulk of the Assembly, and certainly of Church people without those doors, that they did not desire disestablishment." And the other ameliorating circumstance is that Dr. Temple indicated that the Commission would require five years in which to complete its task; so thus the matter may not only be regarded as shelved, but shelved in such a way that it is meanwhile being carefully considered, and yet cannot be foolishly raised at some inopportune moment. Five years' respite from alarms and excursions (if such is really to be hoped for) will give our bishops ample time to think things over, and the general body of the clergy a chance of smoothing out their differences. Also, in five years' time post-war fevers will have abated still further, and we may have reached a state of mental equilibrium. As things are at present, the State displays no hostility to the idea of an established Church, from which the community derives many manifest advantages. But what Churchmen would do well to think out at present is exactly what they mean by "spiritual freedom." Do

they mean the same sort of freedom from complete State control which is enjoyed, let us say, by the University of Oxford, or do they mean the freedom to "compass heaven and earth to gain one proselyte"?

If the principle for which they are contending is the right of all cultural societies to live their lives and develop freely without being crushed by the heavy paw of the Great Leviathan, they will have the whole of the educated and intelligent public with them. That the bishops are conscious that they may be called upon in the future to be the champions of some such liberty as this is indicated by a recent pronouncement of one of their number. In the current number of his *Diocesan Chronicle*, the Bishop of Winchester has written as follows:

In any nation the path of wisdom is plainly to give as free a hand as is reasonably possible to those societies within its borders which aim at the spiritual welfare of the people—using the words "spiritual" in the widest sense, as including the whole domain of religion, science and art. What would be said if the State, as such, claimed to decide what pictures should hang on the walls of the Royal Academy, or what scientific experiments might be made within the precincts of the Royal Institution? I will not pursue the argument further, except to say that where the most vital issue of all is concerned—namely, religion—the need for some adjustment is real and clamant.

Of course, the plain fact is that we do not yet know how the other party to this controversy—i.e., the State—is going to develop in the future. In the past the State has sometimes been the champion of spiritual freedom as against the Church. But there are some signs of the times which seem to indicate that the rôles may be reversed. Freedom of thought in fifty years' time may have more to fear from the State than from the Church. It is worth while for us all to put this in our pipe and smoke it.

## A SLUMP IN VALUES

BY FRANK ROME

IN the catalogues of booksellers who deal in first editions one may find many of the works of contemporary authors offered at greatly enhanced, or even exorbitant, prices. But at the other end of the scale, and as a corrective to any tendency to first edition vanity on the part of authors, comes a bookseller's catalogue of rather disillusioning sort. It is a catalogue of remainders. The dictionary defines this sort of remainder as "copies of a book left unsold when the demand has ceased." One might think that, in the case of certain authors, the edition would be exhausted long before the demand. But this is where the remainder catalogue, regardless of great literary reputations, tells some unexpected, and, perhaps, to the authors concerned, unpalatable truths. But there is a grain of comfort for the authors. This catalogue is a trade affair—a wholesale bargain list. By the time the retail bookseller who offers these bargains to the public has put on his profit, the prices may not seem quite so incommensurate with the authors' reputations.

But they will be low enough to cause some heart-burning, perhaps, to the authors, if they provide reason for rejoicing among impecunious book lovers. That should be some consolation to the authors concerned. Will it, I wonder, be any consolation to a famous playwright for the fact that the limited and signed editions of his plays did not appeal to collectors sufficiently to make them buy up the whole editions?

Even a princess turned author must share the hazards of the book market with less distinguished

writers. What was Society about, to say nothing of more plebeian book buyers, that it did not buy more lavishly the Princess Bibesco's fantasy, 'Isvor, the Country of Willows'? You could not call half a guinea dear, but it is much cheaper now. The remainder price (to the trade) is three shillings. The Princess, anyway, has the consolation of having in the family a fellow sufferer from lack of public appreciation. Herbert Asquith's book of nursery rhymes, 'Pillicock Hill,' does not seem to have appealed greatly to the nursery, whatever the Bright Young People may have thought of it. 'Pillicock Hill' is now within the means of any nursery that likes to break open its money box and take, say, a couple of shillings to the nice gentleman at the bookshop. He could buy it for one and eightpence—and what bookseller would try to make large profits out of nursery customers?

A distinguished daughter of a famous father whose book has slumped badly is Viola Tree. Her book, 'Castles in the Air,' must have been as ephemeral as its title. Her castles have come tumbling down—from eighteen shillings to four shillings. And her father's reputation has not saved a book about him, 'Some Memories'—from an even deeper fall—to less than a fifth of its published price.

Truly, the remainder list makes some strange fellows in adversity. Turning over its pages one sees many honoured names among the nobodies and the mere bookmakers who write only for the moment. What is a famous poet doing in this gallery? What have his disciples been doing to let his 'Poems' become remainders at one and eightpence apiece? And there is a still greater shame to be told of English letters. Even a limited edition could not be sold out at the trifling price of ten and six. It can now be bought for half price, or thereabouts.

Robert Louis Stevenson, we know, has slumped a little in recent years. There have been so many people trying to destroy his reputation. To admit a liking for R. L. S. nowadays is to set yourself down as old-fashioned. But I should have thought there were still enough unabashed Stevensonians to buy up a small limited edition of his amusing 'Moral Emblems.' But no; Stevenson slumps with the rest: in this case from seven and six to one and fourpence. I am not so surprised to see a comparatively recent reprint of his 'Records of a Family of Engineers' also in the remainder list. That was a book to appeal only to the most ardent Stevensonians. But that he should be in the remainder list at all shows which way the literary wind blows.

Another entry which shows how fickle are the book collectors is under the name of Joseph Conrad. A few years before his death Conrad became a craze. First editions of some of his books fetched fantastic prices, which, no doubt, encouraged some publisher to produce a sumptuous edition of his novel 'Suspense.' It was a limited edition, published at about twenty-five shillings. But it was evidently not limited enough, or not produced early enough to catch the Conrad craze at its height—else it would not be in this list for five shillings. Another author, still living, who has seen first editions of his early books at fancy price in booksellers' lists, and has watched, a little cynically, their fall, is Arthur Machen. His publishers, too, must have been a little late, or a little too optimistic, in producing a collected edition of Arthur Machen's works in nine volumes, for nine guineas. The present price of the set (to the trade) is three pounds.

Maurice Hewlett would seem to be no more appreciated now than he was in his lifetime. His 'Last Essays' are offered for two shillings—less than a quarter their published price; and the volume of his letters, published at eighteen shillings, has suffered a proportionate reduction. The late Sir Edmund



Gosse's reputation would secure him, you might think, from appearing yet in the remainder list. But here are two of his books—his 'Silhouettes,' reduced from eight and six to three shillings, and his book of poems, 'The Autumn Garden,' from five shillings to one and eightpence. Another poet has recently become famous with a work of quite another sort: Robert Graves, the author of the much discussed war book, 'Good-bye To All That.' The success of that book will be some compensation to the author, I hope, for inadequate appreciation of his earlier work 'On English Poetry'—as indicated by the fact that it can be bought for less than a quarter of its published price of eight and sixpence.

And Tchekhov. What have the earnest literary disciples of that much admired Russian been about to let his 'Reminiscences' and his 'Life and Letters' (and I imagine that there cannot have been a very large edition of either) appear in the same remainder list with the 'Life of La Belle Otero'? Enthusiasm is cheap: but their admiration apparently could not stand the cold test of £ s. d., else you would not be able to buy either of these volumes for about a quarter of its published price. Apparently, also, the late A. B. Walkley's reputation as a dramatic critic has not long outlived him—to judge from the fact that his three books of 'Pastiche and Prejudice,' published at seven and sixpence, are offered for one and eightpence. The collected dramatic opinions of another critic, who shall be nameless, because you can still read him every Sunday, and three volumes of his essays, can be acquired for the same reduced price.

And—tell it not in Grub Street—here is even Mr. H. G. Wells in this desolate company. Is it because this unregenerate world has failed to come up to his 'Anticipations' that you can buy a five shilling edition of that book for about a quarter of that price? How are the mighty fallen!

## MOTORING IN EAST ANGLIA

PLUMSTEAD—ALDBOROUGH—NORWICH

By J. S. COLTART

THERE is no more variable feast in the calendar than the mid-day meal: its hour varies with the latitude. I do not mean by this that a stranded mariner could arrive at his bearings by observing the local lunch-hour, but it is possible that a journey from the northern division of Norfolk to London can be so timed that it becomes a prolonged procession past wayside lunchers.

"Prolonged high speed is unknown in East Anglia," *The Times* said somewhat unkindly, if truthfully, about the Express Train Speeds of last year. It is a delightful saying and capable of a much wider application than on the metals of the London and North Eastern Railway; and it hits both ways in this matter of lunches, for whereas the speed of this journey by road will not fall very much below four hours, the speed of the lunchers, at their lunches, with the alteration in the times of lunch, is slowed down enough to cover the entire period, leaving the starting point at about eleven o'clock in the morning. And this matter of High Speed in East Anglia will bear further elaboration, for it is a fact that can be seen by anyone travelling by road northward from East Anglia, that the further north you go the faster the people walk. In Lincolnshire the difference is very slight, and in the southern parts of Yorkshire bring little acceleration with them, but when you begin to get among the hills there is a notable speeding up among pedestrians, and in Westmorland and Cumberland they seem to go faster still. This doubtless arises from the greater distances there are between the villages and farms, in short,

from more practice in walking on roads and having longer distances to get over. Yet sometimes we get surprises: on a recent visit of the Hounds we were astounded to see a figure dashing across a turnip field at High Speed in East Anglia, to view the hunt; our astonishment was even greater to recognize him as a bullock tender whose maximum speed we had taken hitherto to be one and a half miles per hour.

The first lunchers are the roadmen; fully a quarter of an hour before mid-day the toilers down tools and take their ease and their luncheons by the wayside. It is with no intent to disparage their labours—does not the excellent state of the English roads testify to their toil?—but it is with the interest of an observer that one records the fact, that except at this mealtime hour, when all are busy getting on with their work, with their bread, cheese, shortcake and tea out of bottles—in groups of roadmen it is the exception to find more than one in three working. Sometimes there is quite a crowd collected round one toiling citizen, sometimes the majority work and the minority stand by, but the usual proportion of road-menders is one third active, and two thirds passive operatives. It would be interesting to know why this is so: is it because the work is so skilled that the majority of labourers have to wait till the few skilled workmen perform their part of the task, or is the work so arduous that it is only possible to work for short spells with intervals in between? One remembers "intensive digging" organized in shifts during the war, but steady, if less intense, digging might have resulted in greater output. The same phenomenon of distribution of labour could be seen in a recent photograph of the cleaning of the *Mauretania* in dry dock: there, quite an interested group of stevedores were watching one of their number doing something spectacular with an acetylene blow-lamp.

As we got away from the arable lands in Norfolk and into the waste Brecklands and the heaths of northern Suffolk and Cambridgeshire, the roadmen and men of the Forestry Commission were almost the only people to be seen, but when we got into the cultivated areas again the farm labourers who were hedging or ditching had stopped after mid-day, and were now lunching and resting by the roadside: after that there were tramps and gipsy caravans, all pausing by the way. Nor were the lunchers confined to the side of the road; outside the inns there were varied collections of cars, lorries, travellers' cars, carts, and all the kinds of vehicles to be found, while within their owners would doubtless be moistening their internal clay.

South of Newmarket the lunchers were nearly all motorists of the more leisured sort. The parties were of every kind and composition: families grouped around their cars with luncheon baskets, rugs, and cushions; parties of two cars halted for a joint repast; couples strictly *à deux* enjoying their own affairs; there were even lone individuals, seated and eating in the slightly aggressive attitude of solitaires. They were all seated under the beech trees which border the road, overlooking that great open plain which the casual passer-by may think tedious, but which may be transfigured by familiarity and affection to a wealth of association and a treasury of elusive beauty. It is rich with the warm brown earth in early winter, the banks and hedges are tinged with subtle colours when the sap is rising in early spring, there are glorious purple fields of sainfoin in early summer, golden fields in time of harvest, and in late autumn there is such a riot of colour in the endless avenues of beech trees that description becomes bankrupt.

Strange and wonderful sights may also be seen here. Not once, but twice, I have followed motor-boats along this highway—they were not under their own power, but were being towed on trolleys. They say, of course, that roads are not what they were, that the romance has gone from them, with the mud and robbers who

infested them, and to support this they might even cite this highway. Where are the Roman legionaries who paced its length, where the monks and pilgrims, Abbot Sampson from St. Edmundsbury, or Sir Thomas Browne from Norwich? Even Charles II and a goodly company of cavaliers knew it well, travelling to and from Newmarket or Euston, with Louise de Querouaille, Lady Castlemaine and other divinities; what successors are there to all this gallant array? And they will go on to say that not only is it an age devoid of romance, but it is an age of vulgarity. Instead of these pilgrims, sacred and profane, the road is infested with every type and condition of motor vehicle, jostling one another, racing one another, driving everything else off the road in order to be in time for a race meeting—and that is modern progress for you! Yet one night when I was speeding up this long straight Newmarket road I was suddenly translated back to the Golden Age. The beams of my headlights mingled with those of another car standing by the roadside, and in this brightly focused light a girl was dancing. She flashed in and out of the beams of light in the sweet scents of the summer night: the black trees and the diminishing ribbon of road stretched away behind her into the darkness. She danced in beauty, a thing of fresh youth and grace on this very old road.

Peace reigned in Duxford aerodrome, for apart from a sentry on duty, the powers of the air seemed to be refueling. But there may be some doubt about that, for up above an aeroplane was flying about upside down. We hoped, for his own comfort, that the young gentleman in it had not yet lunched. In Hertfordshire they must either eat longer lunches, or commence later than the rugged natives of Norfolk, for though it was now past two o'clock an air of somnolence brooded over the roads and fields, the villages and townships. Not that that is so very unusual, life in these parts does not appear to be lived at a very exacting pitch: High Speed here is not unlike that in East Anglia, and years of passage through Barkway, for instance, have failed to reveal more inhabitants than can be counted on the fingers.

And so the afternoon passed on. Though there were London buses and some bustle about Hoddesdon, Cheshunt and Broxbourne, the time of the siesta overhung the new Cambridge road: policemen sauntered along as if they, too, had just lunched; motor garages lay steeped in torpor. It was not till we debouched on Green Lanes and Seven Sisters Road that lunch and its effects and the standard of High Speed in East Anglia were finally beaten down under our feet. And then it was time to think about tea.

## DRAWERS

BY CLIFTON WARD

THERE is a familiar tag of Stevenson's, "The world is so full of a number of things, I'm sure we ought all to be happy as Kings." It is adapted to the infantile outlook. As we grow older not only do we grow suspicious of the fabled happiness of the crowned, but we wish there were not such a gallimaufry of things in the world. In every corner and hidey-hole, and particularly in drawers, there is a clutter of things which, while they may please the child, are distracting to the adult. The dust-bin is the friend of man. I am conscious of this on a wet Sunday afternoon. No doubt there are several tasks waiting on such an occasion—urgent letters, bills that really must be paid, unpleasant duties reserved to the last. What a luxury to put them all off again, and do something else. And what more profitable alternative than to make a clearance of that top drawer in the writing

desk. To do something that you are not obliged to do may be in itself a pleasure.

It would be an advantage, too, to clear several of the side drawers. There is absolutely no convenient place to put one's immediate letters, papers, notes, where they will jump to the eye. When I thrust them into the midst of the rubbish in these drawers they get lost. Every day it's the same, I have to hunt for some paper. Oh, for an empty drawer. Of course, there are people who arrange, docket, keep things tidy all the time. But that's office work. Never bring the office into the home. Thank whatever gods I'm not like that. Better to have a clearance now and then, a far, far better thing. That's the easy method of promoting comfort, without the meticulous worry over details in between. And it is a luxurious feeling, tearing up documents, casting them away, really using the waste-paper basket. The careful souls, getting rid of one thing at a time, can scarcely know that joy. To burn, to destroy, on an ample scale, is to exercise power.

So here goes. It ought to take half an hour, not more. What's this? Family letters, lots of them, how they collect. I suppose it's a sort of sentiment against destroying those for a time, a subconscious apprehension that mother, sister, aunt, will know you haven't kept them. Rather hopeless to sort these out; best tie them up in a bundle. Hullo, here is that draft of the letter I wrote to Colonel Smithson about the orchard fence. I thought it was lost. Better have that. You never know with a choleric old devil like that; it might crop up again. H'm, yes, Fertilizer Company, that can go. Coal—perhaps I'll keep that list of prices. Letter from Johnson, poor fellow; well, he's dead now, that can go. Now, what about these income-tax letters from my accountant? Excellent chap, he puts up a good fight, and gets the goods. Expenses—useful items. Ah, yes, I remember that fuss about the missing dividend warrant. By Jove, yes, why did they lump those two years together? And why should three separate sleuths have been after me then? But the precedent was established, in my favour, splendid. Precedents—what is it Tennyson says?—they broaden down, do they, or don't they? Oh, I must keep these.

What on earth am I to do with all these records of purchase and sale, Stock Exchange accounts? Why do I keep them? Why is it that by some freak I always forget to ask my broker whether one ought to keep them? Could anyone ever come down on you, and make you pay twice over if you hadn't got them? Absurd idea, but one never knows. It's not as if I wanted to be reminded of the infernal things. There, that was Brewster's tip, the Zulueta mine, I don't think. No water, or no gold, really I forget which now, but it lost me a cool thousand. And here's the cotton swindle, and that rotten syndicate—Oh, confound the lot. I'll ring up my lawyer to-morrow and ask him whether to burn them. Can't on a Sunday. Put 'em back. To-morrow, and to-morrow, and to-morrow. The only thing is, if I can't clear this drawer just yet, I must find another. I wonder whether that chest of drawers in the blue room would do, it's really more like a writing cabinet. Perhaps I could transfer the contents of one drawer, I should always know where the papers were.

Yes, it looks like a cabinet, and if I took this top drawer—no, that won't do, Joan has simply crammed this one with odds and ends. Why in Heaven's name does one's wife keep all these things? Extraordinary. Bits of fabric, an old hand-bag, why doesn't she throw them away? Here's the photographic apparatus; she never would take that up, though she made such a song about it. Why doesn't she give it to Charlie, he wants one. Medallion portrait, her uncle—and he never left her a penny. Here's a box; fancy a box inside a drawer. What's in it? Reels of silk, skeins, needles, thimbles. Why do women duplicate all these things? Some magpie tendency in them. Actually, now, here



are some tubes of oil colours. Well, that's no good. Damn the drawer, you can scarcely shut it.

And talking of shutting drawers, the carpentering in the British Isles is a disgrace. Why do we endure it? Generation after generation finds half the wretched drawers jam, and you have to zig-zag them in and out to get them back. Herbert Spencer didn't seem to get on to that. He trounced the dressing-table mirrors that swing down and hit you on the nose when you are fixing your tie. The chairs, too, which leave the small of your back in *vacuo* when you want to press it against something. But not the drawers. And all this stuff in the papers about selling the right kind of goods to the Argentine! This second drawer might do. Now, I wonder why anyone keeps empty aspirin bottles. A ping-pong set—must keep it, I suppose. Old pipes—sentiment. Old gloves, they can go—or stay, what about oiling the cars? Tin pastille box, useful for screws, tacks, that kind of thing. Straps, string, rags of all sorts, bottles, why not bones? These cabinets or chests of drawers would be more useful in the garage. I give it up, Still raining; I'll take a book, and forget it. Charlotte Brontë. Her poems are not as good as Emily's. Hulloo, what's this?

Arranging long-locked drawers and shelves  
Of cabinets, shut up for years,  
What a strange task we've set ourselves. . . .  
How strange this mass of ancient treasures,  
Mementos of past pains and pleasures.

Mementos! Arranging!

## THE THEATRE

### TWO ODD NUMBERS

BY GILBERT WAKEFIELD

*Odd Numbers.* By George Arthurs and Arthur Miller.  
Comedy Theatre.

*Appearances.* By Garland Anderson. Royalty Theatre.

IN spite of a superficial similarity of plot, no two farces could be more essentially dissimilar than 'Odd Numbers' (at the Comedy) and the latest Aldwych play, 'A Night Like This.' The latter, though on the whole a duller business, has one or two memorable scenes; the former, though a swifter-moving and less patchy farce, is merely—well, a night like many others. Or to put it another way, I think, if I tried very hard, I could write a *précis* of what happens in 'Odd Numbers'; at the Aldwych I was so bewildered by the careless treatment and construction of the story that I very soon abandoned all attempt to understand it. On the other hand, there was nothing in 'Odd Numbers' that I shall remember six months hence; whereas the scene in which Messrs. Walls and Lynn conspire concerning the trousers of Mr. Robertson Hare will probably live for ever in my memory and provide my old age with rich material for pessimizing over the Decline of Good Old-fashioned Farce.

But suppose 'Odd Numbers' had been acted by the Aldwych company—that brilliant team of born farce-actors—instead of by a cast of people most of whom were manifestly fish-out-of-water at this sort of thing? Or suppose that instead of Mr. Leslie Henson, Mr. Walls had been responsible for the production? You may say that it is idle to propound such questions and impossible to answer them, and that the function of a critic is to deal with the facts and not with suppositions. I answer that it is impossible to do even the roughest justice, even to a farce, without having first considered whether other actors or a different production might not have made it seem a very much more memorable entertainment.

Anybody who has ever had a play of his own produced, learns from that experience at least one

unforgettable and bitter lesson—which is, that no playwright ever gets what he considers a square deal. Financially, and even (this is rare) artistically, he may get something very much better than a merely square deal; very often he gets something almost tragically worse; but the one thing he never gets is an exactly square one. Or to put his complaint with more precision, his play, as it is presented on the stage, is always something utterly different from his play as he intended it to be presented.

Now, the ordinary dramatic critic (and by "ordinary" I merely mean those critics who have never had a play of their own produced) is apparently quite unconscious of this playwright's grievance. In fact, he assumes the very opposite; and so, whenever he dislikes a play, he very naturally condemns the author. And the author himself, if called upon to make a speech—instead of informing everybody that his play is really something very different from, and in his opinion infinitely better than, the travesty of it which a combination of miscasting and unintelligent production have resulted in—is much too grateful for the "kind" reception, and too happy in his momentary success, to run the risk of spoiling things with a hint that everything is not so perfect as it seems, and assures the audience and critics that it is only through the brilliant acting of the actors and the wonderful production of his producer that his miserable play has not been booed off the stage half-way through the second act. And the poor fool is surprised and indignant when the immediate result of this familiar suicidal lie is that the critics, believing him, blame only him for what was possibly the fault of his interpreters.

The peculiar merit of the critics, who is also a practising playwright, lies in the fact that he is prejudiced in favour of his fellow-authors and disposed to suspect, when a play seems bad, that it might have seemed much better, had it been either differently acted or less indifferently produced. Naturally, this prejudice in favour of all authors will result occasionally in grossly unfair criticism of the actors and producer. But this is a risk he will cheerfully take, knowing that the scales of justice have so long been weighted to the playwright's disadvantage that only by a process of deliberate exaggeration is there any possibility of a proper balance being restored.

Looking at 'Odd Numbers' from this point of view, I feel that Messrs. Arthurs and Miller got as much less than a square deal as the author of 'A Night Like This' got more. Farce, to be in any way distinguished, must be acted by a cast of born farce-actors, and with two exceptions the Comedy company lack that natural grotesqueness which is the true farce-actor's principal, if not his only, essential quality. Only Mr. Ambrose Manning and Miss Margaret Baird seemed "happy" in their parts. The rest were trying to adapt their personalities to the situation—in other words, were deliberately being farcical—without any very great success. Miss Viola Compton, for example, badly handicapped by a wig that was one of Mr. Clarkson's least successful efforts—it was neither realistic nor amusing—shouted monotonously and was merely irritating. Mr. Huntley Wright—oh, when will managers learn that Mr. Wright's stage-personality is that of a quaint and very charming little gentleman, a character in life and not, and therefore not, in farce?—endeavoured to make his lines amusing by a monotonous repetition of his famous "comic attitude." Mr. Henry Kendall, a first-rate comedian (and, as certain moments in this play convinced me, the potential successor to Mr. Seymour Hicks), was much more at home and highly amusing whenever Mr. Henson's "business" was not interfering with a very intelligent light-comedy performance. Mr. Henson should have realized that Mr. Kendall is much funnier without a comic hat; in other words, that what is right for his own brilliant

personality is almost necessarily wrong for Mr. Kendall's. The audience, when I was present, laughed continuously; but then, I have yet to come across an audience that failed to laugh continuously when the entertainment was either a farce or a musical comedy. The test is not whether the audience laughs long and loudly at the time, but whether what it laughs at lingers in its memory.

If Mr. Garland Anderson's play, 'Appearances,' achieves popular success, it will be thanks to the fact that instead of writing (as he meant to) a play with a Great Lesson in it, he has written a Trial Act which, in spite of its resemblance to every other American Trial Act, is crudely effective throughout, and contains one scene that is brilliantly written and (so far as Mr. Doe Doe Green is concerned) brilliantly acted. This is the examination (well done by Mr. Farren Soutar) and the cross-examination (rather overdone by Mr. Byington) of a negro prisoner charged with assaulting a white woman. Mr. Green, a sort of pathetically comic Black Crow, gave one of those rare and really great performances in which the actor enhances a tremendously effective rôle with a wealth of brilliant detail. The rest of the play is technically very bad; the plot is uninteresting and often incoherent, and the Message unintelligible. It is concerned with Faith. Unfortunately, just as Mr. Anderson, through the mouth of his hero, played rather over-priggishly by Mr. Dario Shindell, was beginning to expound his Message in comparatively simple language, he interrupted himself, through the mouth of Mr. Doe Doe Green, with an irreverent anecdote, which not only silenced Mr. Shindell but actually seemed calculated mockery of the author's philosophy! However, there is a pamphlet on sale at the Royalty Theatre which explains the Principle. I paid my shilling; I shall read the pamphlet. If I find the contents to be both intelligible and important, I will deal with the more solemn aspects of 'Appearances' next week.

## MUSIC

### "WITHOUT CUTS"

By JOHN FILMER

THE Messiah is probably the best known of oratorios. Nearly all choral societies perform it at least once a year, usually at Christmas. Its only serious rival is the Elijah. Yet when two Public Schools and a University combine to give a performance of the work in full, as they did a week or so ago at Reading, it is regarded as an exceptional musical event. Musicians came, facing the inevitable drawbacks of a performance almost entirely amateur, because the oratorio had never within living memory been performed in full before. The fact that many were present who do not form part of the audience at Covent Garden when 'The Ring' or 'Parsifal' is given, was not due to any preference for Handel over Wagner. It was rather due to a desire to hear and appreciate the broad lines, unfamiliar on account of traditional cuts, of Handel's composition, whereas the fashion for uncut Wagner has rendered the broad lines of his music familiar to all.

It is unlikely that Reading will start a fashion for full performances of eighteenth-century works. It is also undesirable. We really cannot have an orgy of interminable *opera seria*, possibly with their *intermezzi* in the true eighteenth-century manner. If such performances were given they would probably become the pastime of a small coterie remote from the exigences of modern life—a danger in which Wagner already stands. Coming away from 'Parsifal' many of us

have rather the feeling that we have performed an unpleasant duty than listened to a masterpiece. There is no doubt, however, that the Reading performance was enjoyable enough, and a good many who heard it must have asked themselves why a complete 'Messiah' had never been done before.

The reason is, of course, that the cutting of a long work is a social necessity. No doubt the Wagnerite will object that a great man's work should be above any consideration of mere time. Nevertheless, most of us find it inconvenient, and sometimes impossible, to get to a theatre much before eight o'clock in the evening, and trains wait for no man—especially last trains. But there have also been other reasons for cutting, besides mere convenience. Dr. Bowdler did not cut out parts of Shakespeare's plays in order to save time. He felt that the plays of Shakespeare were edifying and, if there were a few passages less edifying than the rest, the effect of the whole would be more perfect if they were removed. Now, to the Victorians, Handel was a composer of sacred music; the fact that he had written a host of Italian operas in which some of the characters were not quite nice was a lamentable accident, like Wordsworth's illegitimate child. Obviously, then, those places in which Handel fell below his Victorian rôle of sacred musician must be kept dark.

That such a falling off should occur in the 'Messiah' is probably news to most people. However, the words of the second part of the air, "He was despised and rejected," with their references to spitting and other unpleasant things, were evidently very shocking to Victorian ears, and this part has been excised with characteristic thoroughness. Not only are there no orchestral parts available in print, but the publishers are so polite that the only possible cue for the orchestra to re-commence—the word "spitting" from the soloist—is also missing. There was naturally an accident at this point in the Reading performance.

Sir Thomas Beecham has lately revealed to us the workings of the Victorian mind in regard to another oratorio of Handel. In 'Solomon' Handel, the composer of Italian opera, does not neglect the opportunities given him by the hero's little affair with the Queen of Sheba. Now even the Victorians were prepared to admit that monarchs, and especially oriental monarchs, were entitled to some little latitude, but surely there was no need to call it from the house-tops. In the traditional performing versions of 'Solomon,' therefore, the Queen of Sheba plays a very minor part. Sir Thomas's approach is on very different lines. All he has asked himself is: "Where is the best music?" and the Queen of Sheba emerges from her obscurity to answer him. Then, since the work is too long for modern performance, the musically poorer numbers must go, however edifying the words may be. This may be termed cutting for artistic effect.

We must not, however, suppose that, whatever their apparent artistic justification, cuts can really improve the work of a master. Their sole excuse is that the performance must be got through within a certain time. Social habits change, and works written for performance in the spacious and leisurely eighteenth century, when the dinner hour was five and bed-time anything short of dawn, are often too long for us. Let us by all means laugh at the Victorians for their attempts at improving Handel, but let us also bear in mind that tastes change as well as habits. The cuts that seem to us to improve 'The Ring' may be laughed at in some future time, when men are more interested in moral problems. They may be quite willing to sacrifice the clamorous ride of the Valkyries in order to get every note and word of the, to us, very boring conversations between Wotan and Fricka.

The moral is—no traditional cuts. Let every age cut out what displeases it. The influence of the work will thus gain. Nevertheless, we owe it to the masters sometimes to perform their works entire so that the



grand lines of their structures do not become blurred in our minds. The pleasure derived from the cut versions will thus be enhanced and we shall be able to walk with expanded chests after the manner of those who have performed their duty—you often see people like this at Bayreuth.

Such performances could easily be arranged either on two successive evenings or on high-days and holidays. The eighteenth-century masters would gain immensely by such treatment. Formal problems interested them deeply. Their works were planned as wholes and not built up item by item. It is just as foolish to attempt to criticize Handel from cut versions of his work as to criticize Leonardo from the patched and mutilated fresco in Santa Maria delle Grazie.

## ART

### PLAYING CARDS AT THE ITALIAN EXHIBITION

BY ROBERT STEELE

**A**MONG the exhibits there is a small case in Room IX which should attract the attention of everyone who is interested in the history of playing cards, both for the intrinsic beauty of the cards there shown, and for the fact that they are not only the most beautiful but also pretty certainly the oldest playing cards known. Portions of two packs are shown, one belonging to the Visconti family and executed either for the marriage of Filippo Maria Visconti with the daughter of the Duke of Savoy or during their married life, i.e., between 1427 and 1447; the other and slightly smaller pack belonging to Signor Brambilla, distinguished by a red line round the border. These cards are usually called Tarot cards, but the Visconti pack is really a Minchiate pack. In these games there are five suits, one of them a permanent set of trumps (they were originally called triumphs, and were a separate game) and four suits of king, queen, knight and jack with ten numeral cards. The suits were swords (spades), clubs, deniers and cups, these latter corresponding to our red cards and marked by the peculiarity that a lower card took a higher one (ace lowest). The trumps were usually numbered 1-21 with an unnumbered card answering to our "joker," and some of them, The Car, The Lovers (with the arms of Savoy and Visconti), Force, Death, the Judgment, Il Mondo, the Emperor, the Empress, are shown in the case. The Minchiate pack was distinguished from the Tarot pack by having forty-one triumphs, among those not belonging to the Tarot pack being Faith, Hope, and Charity, shown in the case. Hope is represented with her anchor, while at her feet Judas, the traitor, is lying prostrate. Among the Brambilla cards only one triumph is shown, The Wheel of Fortune. It is worth noting that the court cards of the club suit in this pack carry a long javelin barbed and feathered instead of a club. A portion of a smaller-sized pack is now in the collection of Mr. Pierpont Morgan, and others are in the Carrara Museum at Bergamo, but the only cards that come near the Visconti cards in beauty of execution are those in the Bibliothèque Nationale of Paris, "dit Charles VI," and some equally beautiful cards at Stuttgart, where the suit marks are birds and beasts.

The artist of these enchanting cards is unknown; they used to be attributed to Marziano da Tortona, but the attribution has been shown to be impossible. If one compares them with the illuminations shown in the Grenville Library at the British Museum, a certain kinship of feeling is manifest.

As to the origin of the subjects, they are wholly Florentine; the greater part are taken from the Baptistery Gates, and the remainder from similar well-known sources. The Brambilla cards are obviously of later date, and by a lesser artist. It is, however, a privilege of the first order to be able to examine these cards at leisure, since at their home in Milan it is almost impossible to get a sight of them without a personal introduction to their owners, and our gratitude is due to these and to the authorities who obtained their loan.

## BROADCASTING

**S**IR JOSIAH STAMP'S point of view on Monday was an object lesson in logical reasoning and deliberation, if not exactly an example to be followed in oratory. Perhaps the microphone put Sir Josiah out of countenance, although it is not the first time he has broadcast a speech, but, whatever the reason, his disjointed sentences failed to drive his points home with any determination. Nevertheless, those who listened in at 9.25 will appreciate the qualities of clear vision and ability to probe to the bottom of a problem that distinguish Sir Josiah Stamp as an eminent economist and statistician.

Sir Hugh Bell, whose name will be remembered among business circles as a pioneer of the iron founding industry, has led an interesting life in unusually interesting times. His reminiscences on Tuesday evening were full of pertinent observations on the industrial and political development of the country from the time when, as a boy, he studied at Göttingen in the Kingdom of Hanover. He has seen many changes, some for the better and some for the worse, and he upholds the ideal of a higher standard of living. But, he says, higher life must be earned and not given. It will take all our energy to bear the heavy burden of taxation resulting from a lack of combined effort and the prevailing unsettled conditions.

Those who appreciate Bach and Brahms will have welcomed the opportunity of hearing the French Suite in E flat by John Sebastian Bach, played by Mr. Harold Samuel. Mr. Samuel gave a splendid rendering of this charming and, unfortunately, only too infrequently heard work, in spite of the difficulties of a broadcast pianoforte recital. It is almost impossible, no matter how excellent the pianist, to impart through the microphone that final touch of intimacy and warmth that comes from the pianist's own personality. Invariably, such a performance resolves into a supremely perfect exhibition of technique. Brahms's Ballade in G minor was another charming item in Mr. Samuel's programme.

The following are selected from the programmes for the coming week. (All National and London Regional.) Monday: Sir Henry Newbolt, C.H., Points of View, 9.25. Tuesday: 'Problems of Personal Liberty—Freewill,' discussed by Dr. L. P. Jacks and Mr. C. A. Siepmann (L.R. 8.30). Wednesday: A discussion on War Books between Mrs. M. A. Hamilton, M.P., Mr. Douglas Jerrold and Mr. Vernon Bartlett (9.25), A Mehul Operetta, 'There's No Fool Like a Young Fool' (10.15). Thursday: 'The House Fairy,' a play by Laurence Housman (10.10), Sir John Cadman, 'The Romance of Oil' (L.R. 6.40). Friday: B.B.C. Symphony Concert conducted by Sir Edward Elgar and Sir Thomas Beecham (8.0), Mr. T. S. Elliot, 'The Devotional Poets' (L.R. 8.30). Saturday: Mr. Douglas Jerrold, 'The Cobbler of Koeppenick' (9.25); a Bantock programme conducted by Sir Granville Bantock (L.R. 9.5).

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

¶ *The Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW welcomes the free expression in these columns of genuine opinion on matters of public interest, though he disclaims responsibility alike for the opinions themselves and the manner of their expression.*

¶ *Letters on topical subjects, intended for publication the same week, should reach him on Tuesday.*

## WESTMINSTER ABBEY

SIR,—Your 'Note of the Week' on the Abbey sacristy was spoilt by the mistake you made at the end. Westminster Abbey is not a "national monument" but a Christian church, not a "national possession" but a possession of the Church of England, which brought the nation into being. You say you "will not rake in the embers of last year's controversy," and then proceed to do so, in a manner which is—quite unintentionally, I am sure—unjust and offensive to the Dean and Chapter. So far from "committing themselves" to a scheme, these "temporary guardians" (what other kind of guardians is it possible to get in this world?) went out of their way to make it easy for every passer-by to discuss and criticize their tentative scheme. Even if the State had the right to appoint other guardians of the Abbey, or usurped that right, there is no reason to suppose that they would be as sensitive to educated public opinion as the Church's guardians of the Church's property have proved themselves to be. Your comparison with the Syon Park proposal, which revealed in its authors so deplorable a lack of the sense of responsibility shown by the Dean, is ludicrous.

I am, etc.,  
CHAS. J. CRABTREE  
Vicar

St. George's Vicarage,  
Chorley, Lancashire

## THE DEATH PENALTY

SIR,—Dr. Temple, Archbishop of York, when preaching at the Howard League for Penal Reform at St. Martin-in-the-Fields quite recently, said that the influence of the death penalty probably tended to increase the number of murders, and that it seemed quite plain to him that it would be for the benefit of society if it were abolished. That manly sermon should be read by everyone. It was untinted by sentiment, and it had the quality of mercy which is not strained.

I feel that this is a barbarous system and that it is not only cruel to the criminal, but fearful for the judge when he dons his mock-mourning black cap, and for the jury, and for the executioner, who after discharging his gruesome duty goes forth among his fellows. Also too much responsibility rests upon the Home Secretary. Many have been hanged for insanity, by mistake. These cases should come within the province of skilled medical men, rather than that of a judge and jury. I am not writing of imbeciles (they are protected) but of men and women who have, or have had, brains, often genius. Having been a district visitor, I have come across sufferers who can talk brilliantly, and yet through fear or shame, have studiously hidden the kink in their minds, which revelation would have saved them from punishment after committing some criminal act.

It may be that instead of acting as a deterrent, the death penalty, for some, has the fascination of fear, which, probably, the poor moth experiences when it persistently flies into the lighted candle. If we could eliminate fear, we should be a long way on the road to mental healing. The mother who adores her infant, the husband who worships his beloved wife, and others when in an abnormal state of mind, kill them from the intense fear that they might. So the fright becomes

father to the thought, which is translated into action. If the character of a fine moral being can, through sleepy sickness, be transformed into something of a fiend, there must be some corresponding brain disturbance of heredity, or circumstances which will turn a man or woman into a criminal. We do not hang our unfit, or vicious dogs and cats? Shall we be less merciful to our fellow-creatures? It may be asked, "What are we to do with these people?" Should they not, when capable, have the choice of a lethal chamber, or of restraint in a mental hospital or elsewhere until they regained or acquired inhibitory power? Nothing worse than this for anyone! People speak of the criminal classes as if they were a special congregation living in such parts as the old Seven Dials, whereas they range from the highest to the lowest-born in society.

Darwin, Huxley, J. Arthur Thomson, Weismann, Galton, Sir Arthur Keith, and a host of other illustrious men have proved that heredity determines the individual life. It follows from this that in the light of science it is imperative that we should insist on fair dealing with the unfortunates.

As surely as civilization advances, so surely shall we pity and help the criminal.

I am, etc.,  
MARY G. ADDY

## SEX AND MARRIAGE

SIR,—“Quaero's” article appears to be a valuable contribution to the discussion of a problem which has perplexed and puzzled the world ever since it rejected the ingenious theory of the Greek philosopher who suggested that man was originally unisexual, but had been split in two by Zeus, with the result that the two halves were perpetually trying to find each other, and reunite.

Freudians, I imagine, explain marriage as originating in the mere gratification of the sexual instinct; but according to Westermarck it has existed, in some form or other, among primitive peoples from the very earliest times, and is perhaps adumbrated in that instinct of some of the lower animals which leads them to pair for life. It seems reasonable, therefore, to suppose, as it has spread so widely and survived so long, that it subserves the best interests of mankind; and, if so, it is not likely to be superseded by any alternative suggested by Russian Soviets, or by advocates of “Free Love.” But it seems almost certain that some of its conditions at the present day might be altered with advantage, in the interests of the prospective family, as well as of the parents themselves. The time, anticipated by Sir E. Ray Lankester, has not yet come “when the production by careful and restricted breeding of a sound and healthy population, will be recognized as being part of the duty of the makers and administrators of the law,” but public opinion perceives the need for some solution of the many difficulties with which the whole question is beset, and is inclined to look to Medicine rather than to Theology.

I am, etc.,  
WALTER CRICK

Eastbourne

## SCOTT AND BIOGRAPHY

SIR,—The ‘Life of Sir Walter Scott’ which Mr. Gwynn has just published interests me deeply, as I have read and written on Scott and Lockhart for many years. Mr. Gwynn has my warm thanks and those, I should think, of a large body of readers, for the skill and appreciation he has brought to a task which evidently delighted him. I wish, however, to raise one or two points of difference with him. A few years ago I seem to remember a little book on biography in which it was stated that such works as Lockhart's



could no longer be written. Up-to-date biographers must, it seems, invent some complex for their suffering subject, exaggerate his faults rather than his virtues, produce some theory of his mental make-up which the facts are used or freely distorted to fit. I am old enough to believe with Renan :

On ne doit jamais écrire que de ce qu'on aime. L'oubli et le silence sont la punition qu'on inflige à ce qu'on a trouvé laid on commun dans la promenade à travers la vie.

I still think, in spite of modern objections, that hero-worship has done, and will do, a good deal for humanity, and may not be out of place in biography. It is at least as good as marked denigration. Mr. Gwynn, not indifferent, of course, to Scott's charm, seems uneasy about Lockhart's testimony because

as Lang says, Scott evidently fell in love with his son-in-law; and Lockhart's feeling was only just on this side of idolatry.

So, he writes, we must go to Hogg for the significant identification of Scott with Col. Mannering and read his account of Scott in anger (pp. 229, 230). On that occasion Scott had good reason to be angry with the absurd Shepherd, but there is no trace of undue choler in the interview as reported by Hogg, who was, indeed, quickly forgiven. Hogg was frankly an exaggerator, whatever his insight into character.

As for Scott's relations with his son, we are to realize that :

all the imperiousness and the sharp assertions of parental authority which Scott depicts were—according to Hogg—Scott's own characteristics; what is more, the portrait accords perfectly with the tone of Scott's own letters to his son when his son was a subaltern.

I see nothing unduly sharp or imperious in Scott's advice to a son lazy about letter-writing, though his attitude may seem absurd to a generation which professes a kindly tolerance of fathers and elders, if not a selfish indifference to their claims.

Mr. Gwynn admits that there is "not much trace in Lockhart's picture of any somewhat choleric colonel," but he returns to the charge of latent fierceness in reviewing 'The Bride of Lammermoor' (pp. 284, 285, reference omitted in index). He concludes that "nowhere else is the hidden self of the maker so openly revealed." The book was, as is well known, written in such pain that Scott, when he read it in print, remembered nothing about it, but it seems to me very hazardous to suppose that it records Scott's fierceness over the loss of his first love. Artists of experience are not so dependent on actual life as that, and the story was, as Mr. Gwynn admits, bound to be tragic. Anybody less like Scott than the gloomy Master of Ravenswood I cannot conceive. He had a natural buoyancy which kept him out of morbid reflections.

Further, he was not a representation of the *perferendum ingenium Scotorum*. He was a Lowlander and, in depicting moments of tragedy and passion, turned back with a smile of good sense on the hero and himself. No choleric colonel could manage men as he did, allow for their foibles and get the best out of them. He might have been a great administrator. In his actual life he was the darling of all circles as well as his own, and the Scot who was able a few years since to abuse and misunderstand him in print, remains a marvel.

Royal Societies Club,  
St. James's Street, S.W.1

I am, etc.,  
OLD PEN

#### OXFORD JOURNALISM

SIR,—Will you allow me to correct a slight inaccuracy of your Oxford Correspondent in your issue of March 1? He states that the "new undergraduate

journal,' *Farrago*, is apparently designed to take the place recently vacated by the *Oxford Outlook*." As far as I know, the *Oxford Outlook*, which issued its fifty-first number a week before the first of *Farrago* appeared, is to continue as usual; and although *Farrago* represents a rather different side of Oxford literary life, it is designed neither to oppose nor to supplant the *Outlook*.

I am, etc.,  
PETER BURRA  
Editor of *Farrago*

Christ Church, Oxford

#### LITERARY COMPETITIONS—211

SST BY THE EDITOR

A. The new Gibbon (b. 3001, d. 3072 A.D.) in writing the 'History of the Decline and Fall of the British Empire,' discovers after exhaustive enquiry into contemporary sources that the real cause of the catastrophe is the excessive addiction of youth and middle age to the game of Golf. In order to anticipate this brilliant generalization by a thousand years, we offer a First Prize of One Guinea and a Second Prize of Half a Guinea for the conclusion of a chapter in the authentic Gibbonian style on 'Golf as the Cause of British Downfall.' The substantives and adjectives may be of any number of syllables, but the total words must not exceed 250.

B. From time immemorial Tennyson's 'Brook' has sung that

Men may come and men may go  
But I go on for ever.

Unfortunately a year of drought comes, and the Brook first doubts, and finally despairs, of its ability to live up to the reputation conferred on it by the poet. We offer a First Prize of One Guinea and a Second Prize of Half a Guinea for four stanzas in the appropriate Tennysonian metre on the Brook's Fear that in the continuing Drought it will not go on for Ever.

#### RULES

- i. All envelopes must be marked LITERARY, followed by the number of the Problem, in the top left-hand corner, and addressed to the Editor, The SATURDAY REVIEW, 9 King Street, London, W.C.2 (e.g., this week: LITERARY 211A or LITERARY 211B).
- ii. Typescript is not essential, provided the writing is legible, but competitors must use one side of the paper only. Pen-names may be employed if desired.
- iii. Where a word limit is set, every fifty words must be marked off by competitors on the MSS.
- iv. The Editor's decision is final. He reserves to himself the right to print in part or in whole any matter sent in for competition, whether successful or not. MSS. cannot be returned. Competitors failing to comply with any of the rules will be disqualified. Should the entries submitted be adjudged undeserving of award the Editor reserves the right to withhold a prize or prizes.

Entries must reach the Editor, addressed according to the rules, not later than by the first post on Monday, March 24. The results will be announced in the issue of March 29.

#### RESULTS OF COMPETITIONS 209

SET BY HUMBERT WOLFE

A. We offer a First Prize of Two Guineas and a Second Prize of Half a Guinea for a poem in not more than 25 lines entitled, 'The White Peacock of the Lake Argues Against Colour.'

B. "To achieve the age of 30 is to have failed in life," said Saki. We offer a First Prize of Two

Guineas and a Second Prize of Half a Guinea for proof of this in not more than 250 words, with or without reference to Mr. Beverly Nichols, Mr. Evelyn Waugh, Mr. Michael Arlen and Uncle Tom Cobby and all.

#### REPORT FROM MR. HUMBERT WOLFE

209A. As has happened invariably in the competitions that I have set, the prose entries are wholly disappointing, with one bright exception for which I recommend a prize, and another of which the merit consists in advising the setter of the competition to go and do likewise—good counsel, but alas, too late!

The poems, as always, were more numerous and of much better quality than the prose. On this occasion, due probably to something unsympathetic in the subject, the level was noticeably lower, though there are several poems deserving serious notice. E. W. Godson's poem had a pleasant movement marred by the use of definitely prosaic words here and there. John Pudney did well with an irregular metre, but nothing will excuse the lines:

"Look," I have heard them say, "at the Peacock of the Lake—the white of his wings."

W. G. offered a competent Browning pastiche. I. M. P. had a charming thought, but she must guard against an excess of monosyllables. E. M. Rutherford pleasantly ornamented the great Shelley phrase: "Time, like a dome of many-coloured glass." W. B. was agreeably comic, but not sufficiently so to ensnare laughter. T. E. Casson wrote a competent Guinevere poem. Issachar would have had a prize if her first eight lines had been as good as the gravely beautiful sestet. There remains Oisín, Miss Norah Butterfield and Alves. Oisín is much the most professional of the entries, and her penultimate verse is the best sent in. But the poem as a whole has faintly the air of a competitive entry (though an admirable one). Miss Butterfield has introduced real colour, and Alves genuine whiteness. As I propose only one prize for the prose entry, I suggest that the first for the verse competition goes to Alves and that the second be divided between Miss Butterfield and Oisín. The single prose prize should go to W. G.

#### FIRST PRIZE

When the high gods from their Olympian heights  
Looked down upon their worshippers below,  
They gave the Grecian Islands violet nights,  
And golden days, and torrents white as snow,  
Long, long ago.

Then near a myrtle grove where roses made  
A scented canopy for Herè's rest,  
I wandered in the sunshine and displayed  
The flashing splendour of my changing breast,  
My jewelled crest.

And then great Herè called me by my name,  
And bade me walk forever at her side;  
While all the roses burnt with redder flame,  
And where we trod all blossoms opened wide  
To show their pride.

But when enchantment faded from the earth,  
The gods discredited, their altars cold,  
Fled from the valleys that had known their mirth.  
Now nights are black, and days have lost their gold,  
And I grow old.

Since they are passed into their shadowy home  
Pallid I mourn; but lest my heart should break  
Wan Aphrodite beckons from the foam,  
Moving upon the bosom of the lake  
When mists awake.

ALVES

#### SECOND PRIZE

##### I

The water-lilies, chalices of pearl,  
Gleam on the silver bosom of the lake;  
The murmuring pigeons on the roof unfurl  
Their snowy fans; while, in the cherry-tree,  
The whispering breeze bids all the branches shake  
A drift of delicate blossoms down on me.

In gardens gold with sunlight, sifting through  
The flowering boughs of ruby-clustered may,  
Let colour spread her banners, gold and blue,  
Like trumpets blown beneath a brilliant sky.  
But here the silent moments steal away,  
Time's snowflakes, falling softly as a sigh.

White rosebuds; jasmine, wreathing with its stars  
The moss-grown wall; bee-haunted, fragrant stocks;  
Sweet peas, whose virginal white no rose-flush mars,  
Here in this pleasance grow to loveliness.  
So flaunt not here your flaming hollyhocks,  
Or fluttering daffodils in golden dress.

But with the long day's end draw near the gate.  
The ivory moon, that gleams between the pines,  
Reveals young Beauty's self, inviolate,  
Hushed in a peace that breathes of holiness.  
How can your colour, bravely though it shines,  
Vie with her flawless, white-hued loveliness?

NORA M. BUTTERFIELD

##### II

This is my pride,  
Albino I, amid the argus-eyed  
Who preen their colours pavonine  
By the dark lakeside.

For see,  
Dimmed by yon green-gold tree  
They spread a jewelled train,  
Poise a tiarant head  
In vain.  
The iris flaunts and the flags fly  
Instead.

While I—  
From the watchet dawn  
Till night paints out the lawn—  
In all the prismy, ever-shifting scenes  
Find out new settings for one Ivory,  
Impearled, moon radiant . . . Me.

O Fools, O Harlequins,  
With sapphire for our roof,  
With walls of malachite  
And all the rainbow shattered for a floor,  
Is here not proof  
That White's the only robe for Kings and Queens?  
Their shadows fade; lo! I alone have light.  
I'll plead no more.

OISIN

#### THE WINNING ENTRY

Speaking as a complacent failure, I desire to associate myself with the author of this maxim, and to congratulate such of his followers as are under thirty on their attempts to live (or die) up to it. One's expectation of life during the Somme battle was twenty days. The giants of the roaring 'twenties ought to be able to achieve glory of some sort in half as many years. By all means let them set fire to themselves instead of the Thames, and leave life's stage, not like well-graced actors, but with the celerity of the scalded cat. Let their verses hurry them, not their readers, to an early grave. Let the music they compose be their own funeral march. Let them perish before they grow old enough to criticize their own books. And when, conscious of having deserved well of their complexes, they cross over to whatever midden is reserved for them in the Elysian Fields, may all the ukeles sound for them on the other side.

W. G.



## REVIEWS

## THE INDIAN PRINCES

*Scraps of Paper; India's Broken Treaties, her Princes, and the Problem.* By A. P. Nicholson. Benn. 21s.

THE continent of India is very prominent in the eye of Englishmen at the present time and is likely to remain so. The unsettled state of British India attracts far more attention than the other great problem, that of the Ruling Princes, but even among the uninitiated there is an increasing disposition to realize that neither the problems of India as a whole nor those of British India can be settled without a settlement also being found of the problem of the Ruling Princes. About two-fifths of the area of India (excluding Burma) and one-fifth of its population are outside British India and are governed by the Ruling Princes. These States, 562 in number, vary enormously in size and importance. Hyderabad has 12½ millions of population, and an area of 82,700 square miles. At the other end of the scale are tiny States of a few acres. As the Butler Committee of last year reported, "the one feature common to them all is that they are not part, or governed by the law, of British India."

For some time all has not been well in the relations between the Government of India and these Ruling Princes. The vast changes that have occurred in British India, the Morley-Minto reforms, the Montagu-Chelmsford upheaval, and the general development towards Home Rule and Dominion Status, have brought into prominence the grievances of the Princes that have simmered for so long. It is the purpose of Mr. Nicholson's book to expound these grievances. The bulk of the book, from page 66 to page 282, is occupied with the past, and it is this part of the book which excuses, even if it does not entirely justify, the title. The tale that Mr. Nicholson tells is in reality a summary of the evidence laid before the Butler Committee last year, supplemented by an account of the grievances of those States (e.g., Hyderabad) which did not join with the others in a collective presentation of their case. The tale is not a pleasant one, as Mr. Nicholson's title warns the reader. When it has been read, one is led to wonder at the fact that to-day the Ruling Princes are loyal to the core to the King-Emperor and enthusiastically determined to uphold the British connexion with India. And in reading this book it is necessary to remember that it contains only part of the story. Mr. Nicholson naturally had to select his material, but it is well to remember that many States that are little more than just mentioned, have serious grievances extending over several generations. None is prepared to let matters drift any longer.

Even more important than this long record of the past is Mr. Nicholson's discussion of the present position and the immediate future, and indeed one could wish that space had enabled him to set out at greater length the urgent necessity for the immediate erection of an independent judicial court to settle the grievances between the Princes and the Government of India. In an appendix is printed the legal opinion of July, 1928, given by Sir Leslie Scott, K.C., and four other distinguished counsel, which was laid before the Butler Committee. But one cannot help regretting that Mr. Nicholson has not dealt more in detail with the easy-going manner in which that Committee turned down many of the principal points in that legal opinion. A good point is made in describing Sir Harcourt Butler as the "Third High Priest of the Temple," the "spiritual descendant of Sir Lewis Tupper and Sir

William Lee-Warner." The Princes must have gasped when they found that their grievances were to be laid before a Committee presided over by a man who, in Mr. Nicholson's words, "was for some years the Political Secretary in India, before he became a distinguished Governor, and who is imbued with the traditions and policy of the Political Department." No wonder that the Report of the Committee "is saturated with the theories of the Political Department." Seeing that one of the main grievances of the Princes is that their disputes with the Government of India are decided by the Government of India, it seems passing strange that in December, 1927, the then Secretary of State for India (Lord Birkenhead) did not entrust the enquiry to someone who had had no connexion whatever with the Political Department of the Government of India.

The essence of the grievance of the Princes is the doctrine, upheld by the Butler Committee, that "the relationship of the Paramount Power with the States is not a merely contractual relationship resting on treaties made more than a century ago. It is a living, growing relationship shaped by circumstances and policy." In innumerable cases the Princes complain that their treaties and the guarantees given to them by Queen Victoria in 1858 and by her successors ever since have been trampled upon by the Government of India. No one can read the historical part of this book without realizing how wanton has been this invasion of the rights of the Princes. Yet when the legal right of the Government of India to act as they have acted is called in question, the reply is in effect that "circumstances and policy" give a legal right to the Government to do what they have done. Just because Simla has repeatedly used the big stick, it is now said in effect by the Butler Committee that Simla has a legal right to do so. Most of the present-day grievances of the Princes originate in this extraordinary doctrine. From 1861 onwards the Government of India has followed the practice of issuing "Sanads" to the Princes defining their "rights" (Mr. Nicholson's "Note on Sanads" in the appendix is a little inadequate). These were usually prefaced with a statement that the rights of the States were in doubt and needed to be defined, and then the Government of India proceeded to define the rights and grant or restrict powers as they thought fit, often regardless of treaties. But in plenty of such cases the States' rights were not in dispute at all, and they already possessed far wider powers than those "granted" to them by these Sanads. So no wonder that the Princes object to the whole idea that their powers are properly defined in the Sanads and demand a judicial enquiry into their validity.

In addition to their political grievances, the Princes have serious economic complaints about present conditions. Most of the States are land-locked; none has great ports. So the protectionist policy of British India, in framing which not one of the Indian States has had any voice, seriously affects the economic conditions in the States. Again, in the construction of railways the independence of the States has frequently been infringed. Similarly, in regard to the salt monopoly, uniform coinage, opium traffic, etc., the Government of India has often acted as if the States were bound to do what they were told. These matters will never be put right unless the Government of India changes its attitude and is prepared to deal with the Princes on a true basis of free negotiation.

Apart from the legal and moral rights of the Princes, there is every reason, even from the British political point of view, why the demands of the Indian Princes should be handsomely met. With British India seething with unrest, ingratitude and disloyalty, the Indian States, both large and small, are even to-day basing their policy on "the initial basis of the British connexion." They were our friends and helpers in the Mutiny of 1857. They have stood by us in every

crisis since. They earned our undying gratitude during the Great War. Yet they have to plead and struggle for a recognition of their rights. Why? Because the British public have allowed what little interest they give to India to be devoted to the vociferous demands of those western-educated politicians in British India who demand western political institutions and yet denounce western civilization. It is time that the British public gave at least as much attention to their friends the Indian Princes as they do to the Gandhis of British India.

"And what is your plan for the Princes?" asked Miss Katherine Mayo of a Home Rule politician in Bengal. "We shall wipe them out" was the prompt reply. Mr. Nicholson's book should make us realize what a bond of both sentiment and interest unites the British public and the Indian Princes in the face of mad and impracticable demands from politicians in British India. And if this book leads, as it should, to a change of heart in the Government of India towards the Princes and to the obtaining of justice for them, its author will have done a great service to India. It is a sad thought that the massive volumes of evidence presented to the Butler Committee may now merely accumulate dust on official shelves. The Report of that Committee is hopelessly inadequate and far from convincing, so it is very much to the good that much of that evidence is now available in a convenient form to the English reading public. The Princes will see to it that the subject of their grievances is not allowed to rest, but they will achieve their just rights far more easily if they can rely upon the sympathy of the British public. It is for the British public to see that British bureaucrats do not obstruct the putting right of the wrongs of the past. There must be no more "Scraps of Paper" in India—even if we have to say No firmly to some of the demands of politicians in British India.

CECIL SHIRLEY

## THE THIRTEENTH CENTURY

*The Cambridge Medieval History. Vol. VI. Victory of the Papacy.* Cambridge University Press. 50s.

IN this volume the final scenes of the long struggle between the Papacy and the Empire are vividly described. The whole future of European religion hung upon its outcome: either the clergy was to be a body of men entirely devoted, at any rate, in theory, to the service of God and their fellow-men, or it was to be, as far as worldly possessions were concerned, a servant of the civil power freed from all purely religious restraint. On one side were three great Popes, Innocent III, Innocent IV, and Gregory IX; on the other the Holy Roman Empire and the greatest ruler of Christendom between Charlemagne and Napoleon—Frederick II, *stupor mundi*. The contest was long and unscrupulously fierce, and the victory was complete, but at what a cost! The unity of Italy was put back for seven centuries; first the Frenchman and then the Spaniard were brought into the land to its lasting degradation, while Germany was parcelled out into scores of little warring sovereignties under the shadow of a nominal rule; the Papacy itself was to lie vacant or be filled at the will of an invader.

The difficulty of appraising this monumental library of medieval history, for that 'The Cambridge Medieval History' is, seems to increase with every volume; and with it that of even selecting special portions for notice. The thirteenth century is an age of completion—for a moment institutions of all kinds seem to have flowered into perfection, and one after another they come into the purview of this volume. The nations of Europe are beginning the slow progress towards conscious nationality, the component classes

of the medieval state begin to appear and to organize themselves for protection and profit. The reign of law is beginning to reassert its claims, and systems of national law follow the establishment of a strong and central government where such exists, with a judicature and the beginnings of a bureaucracy to enforce it. All this, and more, is told at length in the volume before us with a unity of style remarkable in some two dozen authors, for which the editors may claim some credit.

The first six chapters are devoted to the varying fortunes in Germany and Italy of the contest between the Empire and the Papacy, the next half-dozen tell in some detail the history of the European States. Two chapters by Professors Powicke and Jacob treat of English institutions and general history from Richard I to Henry III, with special reference to recent work on law and administration. The Lionheart, as a great soldier, Lackland as Shakespeare drew him, Henry III, "the artist king," are well drawn, and Professor Powicke also gives a brilliant study of their opposite numbers, Philip Augustus and Louis VIII of France. The study of St. Louis is in the eminently safe hands of M. Petit-Dutaillis, the foremost, perhaps, of living historians. From these we pass to less familiar ground. The professor of history at Oslo tells the story of Sweden, Norway, and Denmark from the establishment of a monarchy to the end of the thirteenth century, with due reference to the influence of the ecclesiastical hierarchy in the consolidation of the various governments; Dr. Altamira recounts the long struggles between Christian and Moor which make up the history of Spain in the eleventh to thirteenth centuries, in which the foundation of regionalism was laid, and tells once more the veridic history of The Cid, to which romance can add but little. Dr. Krofta, of the University of Prague, gives us a history of Bohemia from its Christianization to the extinction of the Premysls in the person of Wenceslas III (1306); it had stayed the last incursion of the Mongols and became a fief of the Empire. A chapter on Poland covers slightly more familiar ground, and the contemporary history of Hungary was one of the last pieces of work of M. Louis Leger. In both countries the Mongol invasion was a turning-point of their history.

So far we have not left the domain of the textbooks, revised, corrected and augmented no doubt by eminent hands, but still accessible to the ordinary reader; the second half of the volume consists of a series of essays on subjects which for the most part are quite unfamiliar to the ordinary historical student, and in some cases would require a specialized equipment. Dr. Clapham's account of Commerce and Industry in the Middle Ages covers fairly familiar ground, and Professor Pirenne's views on the organization of the merchant towns of Northern Europe, more especially in the Low Countries, have been discussed at length, and are perhaps stated in too general terms. On the other hand, Canon Watson's chapter on the history of ecclesiastical organization, the relation of the bishop to the diocese, and the financial side of the organization brings together a number of scattered facts into a valuable whole. Dr. Rashdall, on 'The Medieval Universities,' will be especially welcome to many students, seeing that his invaluable book on the subject is unobtainable; and Dr. Little, on 'The Mendicant Orders,' writes out of fullness of knowledge on Dominicans, Franciscans, White Friars, and Austin Friars.

Mr. Reade treats a fairly well-worn subject, Political Theory to the time of Dante, with some freshness, considering how often the ground has been fought over, but the most novel chapter in the book is that of Professor Thompson, of Leeds, who essays to describe the development of doctrinal



theology up to the time of its final statement in the Lateran confession of faith (1215), treating in turn of Free Will, the Incarnation, the growth of the belief in the Real Presence and in Transubstantiation, purgatory and penance, in a purely historical manner. Mr. Turberville is also historically minded in his treatment of heresies and the Inquisition in the Middle Ages. His account of the principal heresies is fairly complete, while in the matter of the Inquisition he steers a middle course, showing how, when it got out of hand, the king would usually step in to restrain it. In the remaining chapters we return to more familiar subjects. Dean Cranage writes a very good account of Ecclesiastical Architecture without even mentioning Westminster Abbey, and Professor Thompson gives us the latest theories on the subject of Medieval Castles, and a conspectus of the Art of War from Byzantine days to the Hundred Years' War. Two chapters on Chivalry and the Romance Cycles close a volume of the most varied interest—a book which no student of history, however deeply read, can afford to pass over—a book which must take a foremost place in every library of reference, great or small.

### THE FIRST FIRE

*Myths of the Origin of Fire.* By Sir James Frazer. Macmillan. 12s. 6d.

IN this book, which is much less bulky than its score of predecessors of the Golden Bough and Old Testament folklore series, Sir James Frazer has followed the familiar method which has produced such signal results for the study of comparative religion. That is to say, every available legend or tradition of the origin of fire has been collected, classified, and reprinted here. Each is then contrasted with other legends of the same kind from other parts of the world, and the salient differences are noted; while a summary of the whole gives the author occasion for a final chapter which discusses what man actually does believe as to the origin of fire.

This final chapter is, of course, by far the most interesting and will be most widely read; for those who are only amateurs of the subject will hardly have patience to wade through the hundreds of different stories told by savage tribes as to the origin of fire—many of them frankly childish, such as the theory that a piece of the sun was chipped off, presumably in the same way the coinage used to be cut down by kings in a financial difficulty. But by a comparison of these legends with other points which happen to be known or, at least, are approximately certain, we get some idea of the strength and weakness of the Frazer method, and, what is more important still, of the strength and weakness of tradition as a record of the truth.

On this, then, two or three points deserve to be mentioned. Sir James remarks that the myths show that man has a craving for cooked food, which is well borne out by his evidence. But no other animal has any such craving, or any knowledge, even, of the existence of an art of cooking in the wild state, and we are therefore bound to assume that man discovered the art of cooking pretty early in his career, so early, indeed, that the very tradition of its origin has died out, and even the most learned investigator of myths accepts this essentially artificial taste as natural. An investigation of the traditional origin of cooking might, of course, produce some interesting results if Sir James undertook it; but his pages at present rather suggest that it was because man liked his food hot that he sought fire. No doubt this is a correct interpretation of the traditional lore; but the truth, if it were ascertainable, must be rather different.

Was the art of cooking first discovered through putting eggs in hot sand? Are there any traditions as to the origin of hot water, which is essential, I suppose, to cooking, but which looks a very different thing from cold water in the way it bubbles and beads and steams? Hot water is rather a rare thing in nature, as geysers are few; was it considered that a beneficent spirit migrated from the fire to the water and stirred up these internal disturbances?

As to this the book is silent; the origin of cooking is assumed without question, the origin of fire is not. But unless Sir James has put aside the legends of cooking for another book, this seems to indicate a distinct weakness in traditional lore. It is odd, too, that fire is not connected with volcanoes, for volcanoes are far more common than geysers; and I fail to notice any legends suggesting the destructive nature of fire. Here it seems always beneficent; but there were, after all, occasional forest fires due to natural causes, and man must early have discovered that fire, if a good servant, was a bad master. Did he not enshrine this fact in a parable or myth? And if fire was beneficent, what was the origin of hell-fire? Hell does not seem to be mentioned here; was it a reflection of volcanic observation? This book, on the whole, raises more questions than it answers, and it is up to Sir James Frazer, with his vast accumulated store of knowledge, to answer them.

A. WYATT TILBY

### MURDER

*Rope, Knife and Chair.* By Guy B. H. Logan. Stanley Paul. 18s.

THOSE who like reading about murder, whether from a sheer morbid love of grisly detail or, as most of us will more readily avow, from an interest in the mind of the murderer, will find plenty to interest them in this latest horrid collection of killings. One might think that all the notorious English murder cases of the last century had been so much discussed and thumbed over, their wretched victims so often resurrected, that there could be nothing new to say about them. Perhaps it is because Mr. Logan realized that we have had something of a surfeit of our own Chamber of Horrors that he has gone abroad for some fresh specimens of homicide.

America, as one might expect of a country in which everything is done on the grand scale, has provided him with a specimen of a mass murderer who might have excited the professional envy of Landru, the French "Bluebeard." And this murderer was a woman—Mrs. Belle Gunness, who ran a "murder farm" at La Porte, Indiana, many years ago. It was her pleasant habit to attract men by means of matrimonial advertisements, kill them, cut them up into neat joints with the implements used in the slaughter of pigs, and dispose of those incriminating remains by quicklime and other means. Belle had a sort of private graveyard just in sight of her sitting-room window. Just how many of her victims, or so much as was left of them, were buried there was never definitely known. Conservative estimates placed the number at twenty. Local rumour ran it into a hundred. Anyway, the police were busy a long time digging up bones—after the farm had been burnt and a body supposed to be that of Belle Gunness had been found in the ruins. If the body was that of Belle, some measure of poetic justice had been done—for this woman and three children whose remains had been found with hers had been battered to death. One of her intended victims had apparently got his blow in first. There was some suggestion at the time that, after all, Belle had escaped and that the body

supposed to be hers was that of another of her victims. But Mr. Logan holds that the body really was that of the female "Bluebeard," and that she had got a little of her deserts.

This case, those of other American mass murderers, and some notorious specimens from our own Newgate calendar—John Lee, the Babbacombe murderer; Mrs. Percy; Allaway, the chauffeur who murdered Miss Irene Wilkins at Bournemouth, and the "Hooded Man" of Eastbourne are among those exhibited by Mr. Logan—make one marvel anew at the mentality of the murderer. Clumsiness is so often the mark of the killer; and clumsiness and carelessness together bring many murderers to the gallows which they think—with an equally amazing optimism—to escape.

### TALKS WITH "THE TIGER"

*Clemenceau. The Events of his Life as told by himself to his former Secretary, Jean Martel.* Translated by Milton Waldman. Longmans. 25s.

BOSWELL owes his unquestioned pre-eminence as a biographer chiefly to his happy inspiration of allowing Johnson to paint his own portrait. M. Martel, in attempting a similar service for Clemenceau, has carried the Boswellian method to extremes; for, with the exception of a few explanatory pages, the forty-five chapters of this volume consist wholly of a series of conversations with the great French statesman, in which M. Martel confines himself to the modest rôle of putting leading questions and diligently recording Clemenceau's answers and observations.

Such a method has its dangers. The "strong, silent man" may be a myth, but undoubtedly not every man who shines in action is a wise or witty talker, or even gifted with the power of self-expression. Moreover, absolute accuracy of record is essential if a faithful portrait is to be given. Happily in this case, the conditions for success were fulfilled. Clemenceau was no inarticulate Englishman, but a Frenchman who could talk, and did talk, easily and frankly; and we have M. Martel's assurance that the words spoken were recorded "almost to a comma," with the turns of phrase, the colour, intonation, and liveliness which Clemenceau gave them. Such an assurance was scarcely necessary; the recorded words carry conviction in every line. The result is something more than a portrait, whether self-painted or otherwise. In the current theatrical phrase, M. Martel "presents" Clemenceau to the reader, and Clemenceau's overpowering personality does the rest.

It is no secret that he was a man of few, very few, friends and many, very many, enemies. Paradoxically enough, though here and there he gives expression to his dislike, or rather his detestation of individuals, one feels, in listening to his conversation, that he was, at bottom, a lovable man and one formed for making great friendships as well as violent enmities. The explanation, presumably, is to be found in the fact that he was first and foremost a politician—and, rightly or wrongly, he considered friendships incompatible with success in politics. "If you ever want to take up politics as a career," he told his former secretary, "and want to get anywhere, don't worry yourself with questions of liking. Keep yourself always in readiness to break with your friends. Otherwise you will be lost, lost. You will never be able to carry through what you have decided to do. In politics it is your friends who hold you back."

¶ Readers who have difficulty in obtaining copies of the SATURDAY REVIEW are asked to communicate with the Publisher, 9 King Street, Covent Garden, W.C.2, who will be pleased to give the matter his attention.

It would be unjust to deduce from this dismal, indeed detestable, sentiment that Clemenceau deliberately and of set purpose held himself aloof from those who were willing to be on friendly terms with him. He was certainly a cynic, with no very great respect for or belief in his fellow-men. But above all he was a passionate patriot, with an almost desperate devotion to France. And, as there is abundant evidence to show in these pages, he quite sincerely believed that those who differed from him politically were dishonest, if not actually traitors. He was temperamentally impatient of all opposition, and, after all, from a purely political point of view, a successful statesman cannot afford to allow his likes and dislikes to affect either his policy or his choice of colleagues.

Moreover, Clemenceau was strong enough and logical enough to accept the corollary of his own proposition. If he was always ready to break with his friends, should circumstances demand it, he was great enough not to allow his personal enmities to stand before the welfare of the State. He was in 1918 practical dictator of France. With him alone rested the choice of the man who should be generalissimo of the Allied Armies. He chose Foch. And he defended Foch when a disgruntled and disjointed Chamber demanded Foch's head. "It was all the more to my credit," he points out with justifiable pride, "that at that time I had already perceived his opinion of me, had already realized that I didn't like him, that I didn't like people of his kind, in whose souls ability and courage live side by side with less attractive traits. I defended him because at bottom it was not a question in that situation of him or of me, but of the country."

In extreme old age, forgotten and neglected by the country he had saved, Clemenceau showed no sign of bitterness. That he never became the President of the Republic was his only regret; yet he admitted that perhaps his countrymen were right in rejecting him. He would not have been content to be King Log; his activities as King Stork would probably not have been appreciated.

Mr. Waldman has given an excellent translation of M. Martel's book, save that he has, perhaps inadvertently, put into Clemenceau's mouth a few American expressions which are rather jarring to the English reader. And his preface is an admirable introduction to the volume.

BE

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## WOMEN'S WORK

*Women Workers and Industrial Revolution.* By L. Pinchbeck. Routledge. 15s.

WE have here a volume of singular merit, whose value is that the author has succeeded in producing not only a lively human historical document under a title inevitably suggestive of literary indigestion, but in offering to readers at this crucial period of combined industrial home and foreign policy of the British Empire a seasonal bird's-eye view of the cycles of industrial development. Furthermore, although the theme is necessarily treated in the main from the standpoint of feminine labour over the last two hundred years, it affords, in view of their post-war emancipation in the last decade, exemplary educative comparison in the psychological progress of nations generally which should be a common interest of all thinking people of both sexes.

The authenticity of such a wealth of statements as comprise the book is ably corroborated by extracts and foot references, which in themselves form a not unentertaining auxiliary to the letterpress throughout, an attribute of which few works of a similar class can boast. When, in its perusal, we contemplate the outcry raised against the new era of womanhood, which after a slow death still exhibits spasms of muscular contraction, one begins to question the reason for such an attitude, and to incline to the conclusion that all reigning houses and generations to an individual are conservative at heart. For it is not policy and conditions in themselves but change which is feared and denounced; change, with all its attendant upheavals and momentary complications, its general-post with fortunes moral and physical. It is the obvious reason for the small number of pioneers who otherwise might be thick on the ground to the danger of their extinction, laudable excrescences on the body of Society as they are.

But the volume in question tends to prove with a subtle lucidity that these are among the last individuals to recognize that there is nothing new under the sun, and if the term "reversion to cycle" were substituted for "change," so-called new ideas would not always meet with such devastating receptions as tend to delay their object which, after all, can never be more than to improve with a revised version some bygone condition of the great cycle of human affairs. Thus we are introduced to an era not so far distant when women seemed to be just as much to the fore as they are now, taking in sequence, first a lion's share in pure physical maintenance; after that, freelancing at various trades in their own homes as they budded, developed and declined one after another, beginning with every branch of agriculture, thence through all textile industries, from spinning to lace making and straw plaiting; finally, not only becoming skilled servants of the machinery which had killed the hard-won specialization of their various trades, but working in coal and metal mines as ordinary labourers as well as in the other grades of these sterner employments. All this, not to mention the more cultivated sources of income in the realms of medicine, dental surgery and business.

But these facts, reviewed as unquestioned items of history, would lose much of their significance were it not for the absorbing and in many cases unbelievable methods of their practice, as compared with those which characterize the feminine rôle in to-day's industrial revolution which, contrary to that under treatment, is one of advancement for the sex instead of its gradual eclipse. Consider child labour, the references to which are all-important in the light of after-development, yet so commonly disposed of by the multitude as a best-be-forgotten state of the "bad old days."

Says a report of 1843: "The effects of early work,

particularly in the forges . . . renders these girls perfectly independent. They often enter the beer shops and call for their pints and smoke their pipes like men." Some of them supported three or four illegitimate children and worked for them without a murmur."

This as applied to girls in their 'teens!:

"In one extreme instance . . . a child of four years had been drawing lace for two years and was then working twelve hours a day with only a quarter of an hour's interval for breakfast, dinner and tea, never going out to play. . . . Among the little embroiderers were some so young when they began, that they could not reach the regular frame on which the work was stretched, and were obliged to stand."

This was a mild atrocity as compared with some of the others, and suggestive of the origin of the popular indictment that "England is a nation of shopkeepers."

Concerning married women a further report of 1843 states:

"One of the most appalling features connected with the extreme reduction . . . in the wages of lace runners and the consequent long hours of labour, is that married women, having no time to attend to their families, or even suckle their offspring, freely administer opium to their infants in order to prevent their cries interfering with the protracted labour by which they strive to maintain a miserable existence."

As for the servant problem it was identical with that of to-day, each new lucrative trade provoking an arrogant independence and robbing the domestic hearth of the leisured and middle-classes right and left. But at this point let the author speak for himself and earn the congratulations of his readers for having handled such a vast quantity of material in so masterly and artistic a manner.



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## VIGNETTES

*As I Knew Them: Sketches of People I have met on the Way.* By Ella Hepworth Dixon. Hutchinson. 21s.

THERE is much bright chat and good "copy" in Miss Hepworth Dixon's memories of the many people she has known in social and literary circles. She glances from one to another on the wing, like a butterfly; but she is not a bee, gathering honey. We see a number of interesting and well-known people in their habit as they lived, and sometimes in their homes. We get outward impressions (with excellent portraits) as we flit along. But, for the most part, we are not privileged to hear these wits, authors, actors, hostesses talk. We know that with a few exceptions they did, or do, talk more or less brilliantly; and we are inclined to make the same demand as the deaf, elderly lady of whom Miss Hepworth Dixon tells us, who nonplussed M. de Saint Aulaire at a party by holding out her ear trumpet to him with the request, "Un petit peu d'esprit, M. l'Ambassadeur." None the less these vignettes were worth collecting. It is pleasant, for instance, to be reminded of Max Beerbohm:

When he joined the young lions of the SATURDAY REVIEW, and became its dramatic critic, Max had beautiful manners, long, curling eyelashes, the most marvellous clothes, and a habit of offering subtle compliments to women. His calm, his serenity were amazing. He was never in a hurry . . . Max was soon a dandy of such importance as to be able to set the fashion among the young bloods. Did he leave a button on his coat unfastened, other exquisites had to do the same.

We are told of Max's green baize waistcoat; of his banished cartoon depicting a Royalty marrying a young person of the proletariat at a Registrar's office in "Lenin Street"; and of his design to write a book on the brothers of celebrities, "featuring," as we should say now, his step-brother, Beerbohm Tree. The latter, we learn by the way, at the outset of his career feared he would never succeed on the stage because he had red hair.

There are some piquant contrasts in the book. We see Mrs. Meynell, in an atmosphere of pale golden light, "the thin, graceful figure always dressed in black, with a little ruffle round her neck, with her strange grey eyes . . . an exquisite personality . . . placed by her literary friends on a pedestal, and worshipped." She was pained by the new literature. "I remember one Sunday, calling on her in Granville Place; she came towards me, already rather frail, in gauzy black, holding in her hand a volume. 'Is this,' she asked, in a bewildered voice, 'what we are expected to read now?' The book was 'Main Street,' by Sinclair Lewis." Then we have Ellen Terry, visiting Mrs. Hodgson Burnett at her country house, and so delighted with the steep *glacis* of grass sloping from terrace to lawn that she cried, "What a lovely place to roll down." And roll down it she promptly did, in her brown gown and cloak, looking, when she reached the bottom, like "a long, brown German cigar."

The men present similar contrasts. Here is Mr. Yeats, in his Euston Road days: "His parlour was hung entirely in dull green velvet, and there were no ornaments save a brass lectern from which he sometimes read aloud. More often he talked, surrounded by lovely women in tiaras (they were then in fashion) and brocaded trains. . . . To say that the poet 'talked' is misleading; it was a spate of rhetoric, and all the guests sat, literally, at his feet." Fortunate Mr. Yeats—that is, if he liked that sort of thing. But the poet knew how to concentrate. "It always struck us how silent Mr. Yeats was while we were at meat; the meal over, he would light a cigarette and launch out into a torrent of brilliant talk." We must seek the man of the world at the dinner table in Mr. Heinemann,

or Sir Harry Johnston. "William Heinemann was one of the best hosts I have ever known. He was an excellent talker, and his gaiety and good-humour were so contagious that the most morose guest was soon set laughing. He always had the latest 'story,' the bit of news which must not appear in the newspapers. The meal was always *un diner fin*."

It is amusing to read of Henry James at his house in Rye suddenly leaving the luncheon table and his guests, without apology, to pace the garden when his brain had seized a new development in the story on which he was at work; while Lord Stanley of Alderley at his seat in Cheshire would slip away from his guests at sun-down to pray, as should a devout Muslim, with his face towards Mecca. Side-lights are glimpsed of the feminist movement, and of the marriages, happy or otherwise, of people who are talked about. In the chapter on Mr. H. G. Wells, who is "the best of good company, an amazingly good talker, a lifelike mimic," we learn that he "is so clever with his fingers that I saw him one evening construct an entire little village, pump, post office and all, out of cardboard, paint and glue." A very useful accomplishment in a novelist.

ADRIAN NORTH

## SHORTER NOTICES

*The Elementary Principles of Jurisprudence.* By George W. Keeton. Black. 12s. 6d.

ENGLISH lawyers, however good at their work and however successful, know far less about the science of law than their continental brethren. Practising lawyers in this country know comparatively little about the sources, evolution, sanctions, etc., of law and usually nothing about other modern systems of law. Many of our leading advocates,

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solicitors and even judges would probably find the subject of this book as difficult and strange to them as did the Chinese, Japanese and Hindu students who heard the lectures out of which this book has arisen. The standard writers on Jurisprudence, Austin, Holland and even Salmond, are not easy to read, and there is no denying that the subject helps little in the practice of the law in this country. None the less it is a pity that the average English lawyer starts in his profession without a good grounding in legal theory. Mr. Keeton's book is a thoroughly useful work and could well be added to the works on more practical aspects of law which law students are made to absorb. In particular his chapter on Judicial Precedents might well be studied by practising lawyers, however mature.

Mr. Keeton says that "the enormous increase in legislation" has "considerably diminished" the importance of judicial precedents, but he scarcely proves this point of view. If he could, one would view the overwhelming output of Parliament with more sympathy. But the semi-official Law Reports still turn out every year their five volumes of reported precedents and the Courts are just as voracious for precedents as ever. One of the first reforms of an English Mussolini might well be to debar the citation of any precedent in any Court of Law unless such precedent had been pronounced necessary and sound by the highest legal authorities. Precedents have built up English Law, but the time has come now to consolidate existing judicial law and severely restrict the creation of more.

*A Literary History of the Arabs.* By R. A. Nicholson. Cambridge University Press. 21s.

IN this second edition, uniform with the late E. G. Browne's 'Literary History of Persia,' Professor Nicholson has made a number of corrections and additions rendered necessary by the progress of research in the last few years, especially in the history of Sufism and its connexion with the Matazilite movement. The bibliography has been recast and a frontispiece added from a British Museum manuscript of Hariri. The work still retains its priority as a history of ideas rather than a literary biography, accurate and not too scientific for ordinary readers.

*The Works of Liudprand of Cremona.* Translated by F. A. Wright. Routledge. 12s. 6d.

THIS is in many ways one of the most interesting issues of the Broadway Medieval Library. Bishop Liudprand is one of our few authorities for the dark period of the tenth century. He is talkative and discursive, and the title of one of his works, 'Tit for Tat,' indicates that he was not a man to forgive and forget. His descriptions of those—be they emperors or kings or smaller men—who had not paid him proper attention are positively spiteful; he has a great nose for scandal, having been educated as a page at Court, and is never averse from preserving some scabrous incident in his enemy's career. He knew Greek very well indeed, and enjoyed quoting scraps of it; he could write quite creditable verse of a sort, and altogether is an entertaining author for his period. Liudprand is translated into English for the first time, though there are several French versions. Professor Wright has done his work well, though why he did not leave the poor bishop his scraps of Greek (he was careful to translate them) we do not understand; they are no better in French. As a source book for Italian, German, Byzantine, and even Russian history, Liudprand will always have a place in the historian's library.

*The Greek Fathers.* By J. M. Campbell. Harrap. 5s.

THIS new volume in the series 'Our Debt to Greece and Rome' touches a side of Greek literature unfamiliar, in the main, to the general public of readers. We doubt whether most classical scholars could give the names of even half a dozen of them, though theologians would be better informed. The author divides his study into periods beginning with the writers of the post-Apostolic age, going on to the great period of Greek patristic writing in the fourth and fifth centuries. When the Eastern and Western Empires grew apart the influence of the Greek Fathers was greatly lessened, and until the Reformation controversies revived the study of primitive Christianity very little was heard of them. The Oxford Movement induced another revival of patristic study, mainly in England and to a lesser degree in Germany. Professor Campbell's account, which has passed the Roman Catholic censorship, is a very fair statement of the subject.

## THE LIFE OF MARY BAKER EDDY

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## THE SPRING BOOK NUMBER

OF THE SATURDAY REVIEW

ON SALE MARCH 22nd

*Manuel de Falla and Spanish Music.* By J. B. Trend. Knopf. 8s. 6d.

MANUEL DE FALLA has suffered, like all artists, from uninformed criticism. He, like Vaughan-Williams in England and Bela Bartok in Hungary, has often been dubbed a mere "folk-lore" composer. We therefore welcome a critical study of Falla's work by a close personal friend of the composer. Mr. Trend is not led aside from his argument by the temptation which must have been great in this case, of chronicling anecdotes; indeed, the biographical matter is very short indeed. The author's aim has been to make as clear as possible the personal significance of Falla's work—quite apart from its national significance. As he quite rightly says: "it is only when you have become so accustomed to the idiom that you do not notice it you can begin to appreciate the musical quality." This applies to the art-music of the classical masters quite as much as to the music of "Nationalistic" schools, as those who have conducted adult appreciation classes know very well.

The development of Mr. Trend's argument has necessitated a discussion of the "Spanish idiom," its origin, and its vulgarization as part of the trappings of "romance." It is treated as briefly as possible, but the influence of his predecessors upon Falla, especially Domenico Scarlatti and Pedrell, is very adequately done. Most of Falla's works are criticized in detail and the book winds up with a discussion of the relation Falla bears to contemporary composers in other countries.

## ACROSTICS

### DOUBLE ACROSTIC No. 417

(CLOSING DATE: First post Thursday, March 20)

TWO ENGLISH STATESMEN, IRISH-BORN THE ONE,  
THE OTHER, OF GREAT FATHER THE GREAT SON.

1. Just half a savoury dish will fit this light.
2. Twin heroes shining o'er our heads at night.
3. Decks those who showed much valour in the fight.
4. Behead what we may call the food of fire.
5. Heart of his work who digs it out for hire.
6. Curtail who vexed her leman's soul to death.
7. In me the most among us first drew breath.
8. An arbitrator free from wrath we need.
9. Core of the rack from which our asses feed.
10. Attired in this your Highlander looks well.
11. To keep due bounds great rivers I compel.

### PUBLISHER'S PRIZE

The firms whose names are printed on the Competition Coupon offer a Weekly Prize in our Acrostic Competition—a book reviewed, at length or briefly, in that issue of the SATURDAY REVIEW in which the acrostic appears. (Books mentioned in 'New Books at a Glance' are excluded: they may be reviewed later.)

### RULES

1. The book must be chosen when the solution is sent.
2. It must be published by a firm in the list on the coupon, its price must not exceed a guinea, and it must not be one of an edition sold only in sets.
3. The coupon for the week must be enclosed.
4. Envelopes must be marked "Acrostic" and addressed to the Acrostic Editor, SATURDAY REVIEW, 9 King Street, London, W.C.2.
5. Solutions must reach us not later than the Thursday following the date of publication.
6. Ties will be decided by lot.

### Solution of Acrostic No. 415

- |    |          |                 |  |
|----|----------|-----------------|--|
| F  | enne     | C <sup>1</sup>  | <sup>1</sup> Also called <i>Zerda</i> . Characterized by |
| fR | a        | Ud              | the large size of the ears, hence the name               |
| O  | dontalgi | C               | of the genus: <i>Megalotis</i> . The Fennec's            |
| G  | uide-boo | K               | bright black eyes are adapted for diurnal                |
| H  | eigh-h   | O               | vision. It eats insects, especially the                  |
| hO | op       | Oe <sup>2</sup> | locust, also dates, etc. Is found chiefly                |
| P  | ugnaciou | S               | in North Africa.   |
| P  | e        | P               | <sup>2</sup> The Hoopoe defends itself by the fetid      |
| E  | r        | Ic              | secretion of certain glands. It is called in             |
| R  | ampan    | T               | Germany by the expressive name of                        |
|    |          |                 | <i>Stinkvogel</i> .                                      |
|    |          |                 | <sup>3</sup> Eric the Red. In 982 he went to Iceland     |
|    |          |                 | with his outlawed father, and afterwards                 |
|    |          |                 | founded a settlement in Greenland. His                   |
|    |          |                 | sons reached America.                                    |

[Owing to pressure of space the results of the Acrostic Competition are unavoidably held over.]

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**TOTAL FUNDS** amounted to £17,815,279, an increase of £1,299,946 over 1928.

**TOTAL INCOME** (excluding the General Branch) amounted to £4,863,653, being an increase of £182,513 over the previous year.

**ORDINARY BRANCH.**—Premium Income amounted to £973,571. The number of policies issued during the year was 15,347, assuring £2,514,360 and producing a new Annual Premium Income of £125,415.

**INDUSTRIAL BRANCH.**—Premium Income amounted to £2,957,260.

**GENERAL BRANCH.**—Premium Income amounted to £65,189, all of which was re-insured.

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**ORDINARY BRANCH POLICIES** in the Immediate Profit Class will again receive a Reversionary Bonus at the rate of £2 2s. 0d. per £100 assured.

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### ANNUAL REPORT OF THE DIRECTORS

to be presented to the Shareholders at the Annual General Meeting of the Society, to be held at Halifax, on Monday, the 31st day of March, 1930.

The Directors have great pleasure in submitting to the Members the Annual Statement of Accounts, shewing the operations of the Society during the financial year ended the 31st January, 1930.

The success and progress of the Society have been continued to a gratifying degree and there have again been large increases in the funds and membership. The benefits of amalgamation continue to accrue and substantial economies, with increased efficiency, have been experienced.

**ASSETS.**—The Total Assets at the end of the year amounted to £59,394,342, an increase of £5,239,301.

**RESERVE FUND.**—The Reserve Fund, after providing for all interest and bonus allotted up to the date of the account, stands at £2,017,598, being an increase of £328,369.

**INCOME.**—The Income for the Year, exclusive of investments realised, was £29,059,361.

**MORTGAGES.**—The amount advanced upon new mortgages during the year was £12,455,539 an increase of £2,241,031, mainly upon the security of dwellinghouses for the personal occupation of the borrower.

The new borrowers number 24,064, compared with 20,926 in the previous year and they now shew an average of only £517 per new mortgage completed. The total amount now due upon Mortgages is £44,783,384, an increase during the year of £4,212,729, and the total number of Borrowers is 118,560, an increase of 11,064.

Of this total 81 per cent. are in respect of Mortgages where the debt does not exceed £500, and the average amount owing on all the Society's mortgages is only £377 each. The Mortgage Accounts are in an entirely satisfactory condition, and there are no properties of borrowers in the possession of the Society to be reported in the statutory Schedule.

**SHARE AND DEPOSIT FUNDS.**—The amount standing to the credit of Investing Shareholders and Depositors is £37,376,744 an increase of £4,910,942 during the year.

**PROFITS.**—The gross profits of the year, after payment of all expenses and Income Tax, amounted to £3,746,830, and after providing for all interest due to Depositors and Shareholders up to the date of the Account, there remains a surplus profit of £455,339.

The Directors recommend that there shall be distributed, in addition to the interest of £3 10s. 0d. per cent., a bonus of £1 10s. 0d. per cent. upon the sum standing to the credit of Paid-up Shareholders, Class 1; and, in addition to the interest of £3 10s. 0d. per cent., a bonus of £2 10s. 0d. per cent., to the Subscription Investing Shareholders upon the total amount paid by them up to the end of the preceding year.

The new Accounts opened during the year numbered 84,701, compared with 79,297 in the previous year, and the total number of Shareholders and Depositors accounts open at the end of the year was 397,681, an increase of 35,714.

The extension of the Society's Branch organisation to many important areas in the country has enabled the Directors to distribute mortgage investments very widely, and they are confident that this policy is not only a prudent one, but it has given opportunity for the Society to employ more capital for new mortgage business in districts where it was most needed and well secured.

The Directors desire to congratulate the Members upon the remarkable expansion of the business of the Society during the past year, as revealed by the Statement of Accounts, and also upon the fact that the Society has still further strengthened the predominant position it has held for many years as by far the largest Building Society in the World. They also acknowledge and appreciate the loyal and efficient services given by the Officials and Staff.

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## THE CITY

*Lombard Street, Thursday*

CONSIDERABLE comment has been caused in City circles of late by the contents of a printed memorandum issued by a firm of stockbrokers to their clients. In my opinion, this circular and those responsible for its compilation have received far more publicity than either it or they deserve. Admittedly, we have many troubles to solve, but believing that these will be overcome, it is suggested that first-class British industrial shares should be purchased at present levels and locked away for brighter days.

## COURTAULDS

Attention is drawn to Mr. Samuel Courtauld's speech at the recent meeting of Courtaulds Limited, which will be found in this REVIEW. Mr. Courtauld described the difficulties the Rayon industry had encountered during the past twelve months, both in this country and on the Continent, and quite naturally referred to the devastating effect of the uncertainty as to the Chancellor's intentions in connexion with the silk duties. Careful perusal of Mr. Courtauld's remarks confirms my opinion as to the pre-eminent position that the Courtauld Company maintains in this industry, and it is suggested that shareholders should, in a year of two's time, find their shares standing at a materially higher level than that ruling to-day.

## PINCHIN JOHNSON

The report of Pinchin Johnson and Company, varnish, colour, paint and enamel manufacturers, for 1929 discloses a satisfactory position, inasmuch as the net profit for the year amounts to £462,348 after providing for directors' fees of £3,650, which compares with a figure of £422,796 for 1928. Shareholders are to receive a final dividend of 20 per cent. making 30 per cent. for the year, which is the same rate as for 1928. In this connexion it must be remembered that the 1929 dividends are payable on a capital increased by the share bonus of 33½ per cent. distributed early last year. In addition to the final dividend, Pinchin Johnson shareholders are to receive a free bonus of one ordinary share for every ten shares held. The issued capital of the company consists of 500,000 preference shares of £1 each and 2,825,162 ordinary shares of a nominal value of 10s. The total of the reserve funds and carry forward at January 1, 1930, amounts to £1,002,859. When allowance is made for the dividend and bonus, Pinchin Johnson shares show a yield of approximately 7 per cent. at the present price, and appear a decidedly attractive investment for future capital appreciation.

## HOME RAILS

Now that Home railway ordinary stocks are quoted ex the 1929 dividends, the moment appears an opportune one to again look into the position of these securities from the point of view of the investor prepared to hold them for the next twelve months. In referring to this subject some weeks back, attention was drawn to the possibility of 1930 results not being as favourable as those for 1929, in view of the fact that as a result of the arrangement by which wages

are to be advanced by 2½ per cent. in May of this year and fears of the effect of the Coal Bill on the price of coal; while these factors are still existent, it is suggested that at their present reduced levels Home Railway ordinary stocks appear attractive. On the basis of last year's dividends a very generous yield is shown, so even if 1930 results are less favourable than 1929 and reduced dividends are paid, investors should still receive adequate yield at present prices. While these remarks refer to each of the four big railways, it is suggested that at the present level Great Western ordinary stock may be described as the best selection, an opinion based on Viscount Churchill's optimistic speech at the recent meeting.

## TEA SHARES

The Tea share market continues to monopolize rather more attention, a fact attributable to the favourable reception that has been given to the scheme for restricting the current year's crop. Tea shares are always a somewhat narrow market, and they do not present suitable media for the quick-turn operator. Those, however, who are justified in taking the element of risk involved, might consider locking away a few really first-class tea shares for good dividends and capital appreciation during the next twelve months. Among shares which I consider worthy of attention at the present price are Travancore Tea, Darjeeling Consolidated, Lunuva, and Lethenty.

## RADIATION

The report of the Radiation Company for 1929 denotes further expansion of profits, the net figures amounting to £295,997 as compared with £279,650 for 1928. The dividend is maintained at 12½ per cent., and the carry forward increased from £123,925 to £141,469.

## BOVRIL

Perusal of Lord Luke's speech at the recently held thirty-third annual general meeting of Bovril Limited strengthens my liking for the deferred shares of this company. Shareholders have received 13 per cent. free of tax for the past four years, during which period the profit has remained exceptionally consistent. That the directors are not paying unjustifiably high dividends is illustrated by the fact that last year's earnings were equivalent to 19½ per cent. on these deferred shares, which can be classed as a suitable industrial permanent investment.

## ASSOCIATED PROVINCIAL PICTURE HOUSES

The Associated Provincial Picture Houses Limited is controlled and managed by the Provincial Cinematograph Theatres Limited. The company owns some sixteen picture houses in London and other parts of the country. Its past record is a good one. The ordinary shares have received dividends of 10 per cent. for the past five years. In view of the fact that at the present price these shares show a yield in the neighbourhood of 10 per cent., they appear to possess attractions.

TAURUS

## COMPANY MEETINGS

In this issue will be found reports of the meetings of Courtaulds, Ltd., and the Land Law Co., Ltd.

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## Company Meetings

## COURTAULDS, LIMITED

## CONDITIONS IN THE RAYON INDUSTRY

## EFFECT OF SILK DUTIES UNCERTAIN

## SITUATION IN AMERICA AND ON THE CONTINENT

## SUBSTANTIAL TECHNICAL PROGRESS

## GROUNDS FOR CONFIDENCE IN THE FUTURE

## MR. SAMUEL COURTAULD ON DIVIDEND POLICY

The Seventeenth Ordinary General Meeting of Courtaulds, Limited, was held on March 6 at the Cannon Street Hotel, London, E.C.

Mr. Samuel Courtauld (chairman of the company) presided. The Secretary (Mr. E. Kettle) having read the notice convening the meeting and the report of the auditors,

The Chairman, who was received with cheers, said:—Ladies and gentlemen,—I will now submit to the meeting: "That the directors' report and balance sheet circulated among the ordinary shareholders be taken as read." (Agreed.)

I will now move:—"That the report of the directors dated February 14, 1930, and the balance sheet of December 31, 1929, now submitted, be and the same are hereby received and adopted, and that a final dividend on the ordinary shares for the year ended December 31, 1929, of 6 per cent. free of income tax (making with the interim dividend already paid, 10 per cent. total for the year free of income tax) be declared and paid to holders of ordinary shares on the register at the close of business on February 14, 1930."

It is three years since I last came before you and explained the reasons for a marked falling-off in the earnings of this company. I am putting it this way intentionally because to-day it seems to be assumed, and, indeed, it has been publicly stated, that this is the first time for many years that Courtaulds have experienced a decline in profits, and the present set-back, of a kind which all developing industries must encounter from time to time, is spoken of as something unheard of. I will now merely draw your attention to the fact that for 1926 as compared with 1925 our trading profits declined from £5,111,000 to £3,840,000; for 1929 as compared with 1928 they declined from £5,171,000 to £3,743,000—not very dissimilar figures, you will agree. However, I shall return to this point later.

## CAUSES OF DECREASED PROFITS

The principal two causes for our decrease in profits are matters of common knowledge. They are, first, the growing uncertainty about the future of the English silk duties, which began to make itself felt about the time of the last General Election; and, secondly, the set-back to American industry caused by the Wall Street collapse. The first cause has been by far the more important so far as we are concerned, and, as mentioned in the directors' report, the main fall in our profits has occurred in this country. I will therefore deal with the English position first.

As I am now going to touch on matters which have a political side, and as I am concerned to give only such facts as I can see, and to make only such deductions as I honestly believe in, and as I am concerned above all to avoid any exaggerated bias or any suspicion of a partisan attitude, I will begin by being perfectly fair and say that the uncertain fate of the artificial silk duties, although it is by far the greatest, is not the only difficulty with which our English business has had to contend throughout the year.

## OVER-SUPPLY AND PRICE-CUTTING

It would be idle to ignore the unsatisfactory conditions which have prevailed all over Europe; over-supply and consequent price-cutting were much in evidence in England as well as on the Continent in the previous year, and, as I said at our last meeting, we could not expect to regain a stable condition of trade in a moment. Still, at the end of 1928, when prices had been recently readjusted and the rapid rise of production by home competitors was coming to an end, there were distinct signs of returning confidence, bringing with them the promise of better business for us. As a matter of fact, according to official returns, English production of rayon yarns only increased by 4 per cent. in 1929; so it cannot be said that increasing output was an important factor in causing trade conditions to get so much worse during the year. We believed that by Christmas we should have a period of steady, if gradual, improvement to look back upon, provided that no Government action, or inaction, shook the foundation of the commercial position.

## THE SILK DUTIES

You may say that we should have foreseen a change in Government, and, following that, the upset of the silk duties; at any rate, we warned you of the serious consequences which we felt sure would follow the second event. Frankly, we did not expect that a Labour Government would take any action which could only result in an immediate increase of unemployment: still less did we expect them to make precedent an excuse for keeping an important industry in a state of paralysis by refusing to declare their intentions. More realistic treatment of urgent industrial problems was one benefit at least which we hoped would follow the accession of a Labour Government to power. For our part, if the duties were to be—or are to be—removed, we would far sooner have met the blow at the earliest possible moment and taken what steps we could to meet the new conditions before uncertainty and apprehension had driven large sections of the consuming industries away from the use of rayon.

At the present time the total weekly hours worked in our factories have been reduced by over 33 per cent., as compared with a year ago, and wages and production have fallen in proportion, but, even so, our stocks of yarn show no diminution as the fall in sales does not appear to be fully arrested. Our present output is actually less than half of what it would be if the whole of our plants, including the second Wolverhampton unit, were working at full capacity. This is the state to which we have already been brought mainly as the result of political uncertainty.

## REMOVAL OF DUTIES A FIRST-CLASS CALAMITY

I told you last year what I thought would be the result of the actual withdrawal of the protection afforded to English rayon manufacturers by the existing duties, and I have seen no reason to modify my opinion since then—that is, that their removal would be a first-class calamity to all those engaged in the industry. I believe that it would be followed by many weaker producers disappearing from the field altogether, and that so far as Courtaulds are concerned it would definitely put an end to any hope of further expansion in this country and very probably result in a permanent shrinkage.

If the duties are to go you may rely upon our putting up a very strong fight against the foreign competition which will follow, and with our large units of production, high standard of quality and proximity to our chief market we shall have certain advantages which cannot be taken away from us. Nevertheless, the low rates of wages paid by Continental competitors much outweigh these advantages. It is still a fact that in several competing countries the rate of wage is less than half of ours, and in many qualities of rayon yarns this represents a saving to the foreigner of more than the 1s. a pound which is the amount of protection we now have, and other things being equal would ensure him a very handsome profit while forcing us to sell at or under cost.

## LOWER WAGES OR LESSENERED EMPLOYMENT

I am pleased to be able to say that I have never had occasion to accuse our workpeople, male or female, of any lack of goodwill, skill or industry—(cheers)—in fact, I hold them to be better workers than any others to be found in Europe. Nevertheless, it is mathematically impossible for any conceivable degree of skill to make up for more than a small fraction of the extra wage cost. I have no hesitation in making this assertion, for the unique position we occupy in being intimately acquainted with the working of factories which operate on practically identical lines in several different countries gives us the surest possible guidance in forming a judgment. It is therefore difficult to resist the conclusion that without some measure of protection we shall be faced with two alternatives: either a lowering of the wages or a permanent curtailment of production—that is to say, the abandonment of important sections of the business with consequent lessening of employment, and the concentration upon the qualities of output which embody a comparatively small labour factor. We have hitherto refused to consider reduction of wages because we felt that our profits warranted the payment of a high scale, but without some degree of protection it is difficult to see any other alternative than the equally disagreeable one which I have just referred to.

Those who adhere rigidly to the old free trade school may say that the present state of affairs has been caused by the original imposition of the duties having fostered unhealthy expansion, but I would submit that the powers that be should look at things as they are and not concern themselves too much with ancient history at such a critical moment. (Hear, hear.) There are many thousands of people dependent upon this industry for their living to-day; it is useless to argue, as some people will, that they should have been employed in some other trade, or that they should have emigrated, because they are in fact now with us, and they stand in imminent danger of being thrown into the ranks of the unemployed.

## GOVERNMENT POLICY

While I am on this subject, may I say that the present deplorable position could not conceivably have arisen had the Government been composed of business men or paid due attention to business interests. (Cheers.) Any commercial man of experience could have foreseen that a threat of repealing a duty a year hence would infallibly have the effect of a gradual paralysis upon the industry concerned, resulting, as the critical day approached, in an almost complete standstill, with a consequent enormous increase in unemployment. I do not wish it to be understood that I am criticizing the present Government in particular; how often do we find in the Budget debates in the House of Commons that decisions are taken in a comparatively few minutes, and upon imperfect information, in matters affecting the vital interests of hundreds of employers, and the very livelihood of tens—if not hundreds—of thousands of workpeople.

I feel that it is high time, in this great commercial country, that large questions affecting industry should cease to be treated in this summary fashion or to be made the sport of party politics—(hear, hear)—and that our statesmen should recognize them as one of the chief, if not the chief, among the objects of Governmental concern.

## NATIONAL VALUE OF RAYON YARN

Then there is another point I should like to put forward for consideration beyond these walls. Rayon yarns produced in this country are nearly 100 per cent. British from the initial raw material upwards, and this cannot be said of any other thread or fibre used by the great textile trades. The cost of our own average viscose thread, analyzed according to the cost of its constituent parts, is 85 per cent. English; 10 per cent. may be attributed to the cost of the pulp, which is frequently, and may be always, an Empire product; only 5 per cent. is at present necessarily foreign in origin. On the other hand, a raw silk thread is 100 per cent. foreign; in the case of a cotton thread of an average quality about two-thirds of the ultimate cost is accounted for by the imported raw cotton and only one-third is expended in England, and the same thing is true of many qualities of worsted and linen. Any Government, present or future, which is concerned to attack unemployment and the adverse balance of imports would do well to realize that the manufacture of rayon yarn has a national value under these two headings to a degree which is not true of any other textile. (Hear, hear.)

## RETURN ON CAPITAL

As I wish to make it perfectly clear that, in my belief, this industry is not in a position to withstand any heavy shocks to-day, I can show you another side of the picture which will reinforce what I have already said. Our own English rayon branch in 1929 only earned about 9 per cent. gross upon the money which had actually been sunk in it, and the rate since the end of the year must be much lower than this, and this is in spite of the fact that we have the largest units—and therefore almost certainly the lowest costs—and realize the highest average selling prices of all the spinners of viscose yarn in this country. It is of course true that through our depreciation policy in past years we have written off a proportion of the capital expenditure on plant and buildings—but no more than we have believed to be necessary, although some manufacturers may appear to hold a different view—and therefore the position is rather better for us to-day than it would be if all the capital expenditure was of recent date.

The profit which is equivalent to this 9 per cent. is arrived at after making all depreciation allowances for the year, but before the payment of income-tax. When the income-tax upon these English earnings and the income-tax upon our investment income are added together it appears that, excluding the payment of Excise duties, Courtaulds' contribution to the National Exchequer in respect of 1929 will amount to a great deal more than the whole net profit yielded by their industrial operations in England; and there is food for serious thought in the fact that, as things are to-day, it would actually be a financial advantage for this company to become domiciled abroad instead of retaining its domicile in this country.

## BUSINESS OUTLOOK

I have now said nearly all I can about the state of business in England, and it is really quite impossible to forecast the future at all closely without knowing what the Budget will contain. It is quite certain, however, that 1930 cannot in any circumstances be a very successful year for the English rayon trade, for even if the duties are retained it is hardly possible that the very serious loss of profit for the first four months can be recouped by any expansion in the rest of the year. I must also ask you to note that all I have said about last year's difficulties and the present uncertain outlook of our yarn-producing branch applies with even greater force to our weaving branch, which at present is working only half time, with, I regret to say, the prospect of still further reductions in view.

## POSITION IN AMERICA

I will now say something about America. We are informed that the Viscose Company made steady progress for the first 10 months of the year, with a gradually increasing output, which actually amounted to about 50 per cent. of the total American production of rayon yarns; and there was some reduction of the manufactured stocks with which 1929 started. Then, as you know, at the end of October the Wall Street

collapse gave a far-reaching shake to national confidence; the upward curve was suddenly reversed; sales were severely curtailed, and the loss of two months' growing trade adversely affected the expected balance of profit for the year: consequently it was no use looking to America for any increased income to offset our loss of English profit: even so, the dividends received from that country account for much more than half of our total profits for the year.

The present American outlook is not very clear; the first wave of depression seems to have passed, and there is evidence of a return towards normal trade conditions—at any rate among manufacturers of the staple fabrics which consume the larger part of the Viscose Company's output, for the luxury trades do not appear to be making the same recovery. But another factor we have to consider is the growth of competition among the American producers of rayon yarns: there will probably be a large increase of output during 1930, and the recent check to consumption may be found to have resulted in letting production get ahead of it. If this is the case salesmen will have a difficult period to face, though they do not expect the industry to be thrown into a state of chaos such as has prevailed on this side of the Atlantic.

## SITUATION IN EUROPE

I now come to the Continent of Europe and our interests there. I need not tell you that 1929 did not witness any improvement in the Continental rayon industry; that much is evident from the fall in share values. Production continued to grow rapidly, increasing by about 34,000,000 lb., or 19 per cent., during the year, and price-cutting was keener than ever, resulting as always in a general unsettling of markets and a frightening away of consumers. The only satisfactory feature of the situation is that Continental producers at last seem to be realizing that such a game is not worth playing, for if continued it can only result in ultimate loss to all.

Certain agreements and fusions of interests have already been made which should result in some elimination of overlapping and wasteful competition, but the field has not yet been fully covered, and there are further difficulties to be overcome before we can say that the outlook is settled. I need hardly tell you that we have taken what part we could in helping to bring about a better state of affairs: Courtaulds have hitherto always stood for conciliation, agreement and ordered growth.

This brings me to the subject of our own Continental commitments. Owing to the over-production and price-cutting which I have noted it is, we believe, true to say that little, if any, profit was made by anyone in the Continental rayon industry during 1929, and as regards the factories in which we are directly concerned, at Calais and Cologne, this was no disappointment to us, as they were too recently started to justify the expectation of profits accruing at such an early date. The other companies, however, in which we are interested to large amounts as shareholders, suffered heavy falls in the prices of their shares, bringing the book values of these investments far below the prices which we paid for them, even though these prices were themselves far below the highest points reached by these shares. Consequently, when we followed our invariable, and the only sound, practice of writing down all our quoted investments to market prices at the end of the year we found that we had very heavy sums to write off.

## REASONS FOR MAKING CONTINENTAL INVESTMENTS

Now I have no doubt that some of you have asked why we ever made these investments. If they were to be regarded merely as financial speculations or valued merely by the probable direct yield from them, there would be some justification for doubt, although we might claim that every expansion in a business of this nature is necessarily a speculation, and that, though we may sometimes have guessed wrong, yet we have often guessed right. But these investments were never regarded by us in this way; we acquired very important holdings, coupled with certain rights and obligations, in two large European rayon companies with the main object of helping to stabilize world markets, and postpone, if we could not finally avert, the chaotic position to which unregulated competition has now after all reduced the industry on the Continent.

We should naturally have liked these investments to have earned us handsome dividends, but we did not count upon these, and we were even prepared to face such a writing-down of values as has actually occurred, for we believed that, even so, we should be substantially better off on balance. This belief I hold to have been justified, for the steps which we took in January, 1927, to prevent a wide market collapse continued to make themselves felt beneficially for about two years, and there is no doubt that they played a very important part in producing the satisfactory results which we laid before you for the two years prior to 1929. Moreover, these investments, which in our opinion are now valued upon a solid basis, represent a series of alliances which should prove of inestimable worth to us in future negotiations, especially in the event of this country being laid open to attack by Continental importers through the removal of the artificial silk duties. (Hear, hear.)

## GROUNDS FOR CONFIDENCE

As I have already kept you a long time endeavouring to give you a true picture of the difficulties which are naturally

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uppermost in all our minds, I will now mention more briefly the grounds which we have for confidence. In the first place, we have made continued and substantial technical progress during the year, especially towards the simplification of methods, with important possibilities in the way of reduced costs. I need say no more about these except that they will undoubtedly add to our competitive strength, and, though we do not flatter ourselves with the possession of a monopoly of brains, under anything like fair conditions we shall not fear a trial of strength with anybody. (Hear, hear.)

Then as to our financial methods, in spite of reduced earnings we have continued to write down our plants at the usual rates of depreciation as hitherto, whether they have been in full work or not, so that our present-day costs of production will reap the full benefit of this.

#### BOARD'S DIVIDEND POLICY

Now, finally, I am going to try to meet two lines of criticism to which we have been subjected—one, that we should have put ourselves in the position of being able to equalize dividends by distributing less liberal dividends in the past, and the other that we should have distributed a higher dividend this year and should not have written our special losses out of profits. It is evident that these two criticisms are, to some extent, mutually destructive, and they bring us back to this: that you cannot please everybody, unless everybody wants the same thing. (Laughter.)

To those who think that we should have declared a lower dividend last year, and that the declaration which we did make raised false hopes as to the future, I would reply as follows: We had frequently been found fault with in the past for being illiberal to our shareholders, and for adding to what were called unnecessarily large reserves. Last year we had exceptionally satisfactory profits to deal with. We started by adding £1,000,000 to general reserve, and then we gave our shareholders the direct benefit of the remainder, believing that they are entitled to a higher-than-average rate of distribution after an exceptionally good year, and feeling that anyone who is not wilfully blind must realize that an industry which has been expanding at such a prodigious rate as this is necessarily speculative in character, and that downs must be expected as well as ups.

At the same time we did our best to avoid raising undue future expectations by clearly warning our shareholders to expect reduced profits in 1929. I said at our last meeting that the "very best we could hope for" was that profits would not diminish, and I gave substantial reasons for showing how unlikely it was that even this maximum of possible good fortune would be attained. I cannot believe that the majority of our shareholders would like dividends to be kept down to such a low level that any possible decline from one year to the next would be for ever ruled out.

#### NEED FOR SUBSTANTIAL RESERVES

Other critics have suggested that we should have paid a higher dividend this year and written down our Continental investments out of general reserve, or alternatively, that we should have set apart a portion of the general reserve for the equalization of dividends, and drawn upon that. Now, I will point out that we have actually drawn £700,000 from last year's carry-forward towards the writing off of these investments and the payment of the dividend, which in principle, though not perhaps in amount, comes to what these people desire. But the underlying reasons for not taking from general reserve in one form or another are two. In the first place we believed that the declaration of a dividend higher than 10 per cent. for the year would have been definitely misleading, for it would have indicated, we thought, that the period of difficulty through which we were passing was merely temporary, and encourage hopes of an earlier revival than we think to be likely.

#### COMPETITION

The second reason is this: We cannot rule out the possibility that the real fight is yet to come, and it would be folly to deplete our reserves in advance of that event. (Hear, hear.) I said earlier that Courtaulds had hitherto stood for conciliation and agreement. Up to the present we have believed that it has paid us—and also benefited the whole industry—to uphold a steady level of prices, even if it involved putting some restriction upon the expansion of our output. Lately, however, we have begun to feel that our forbearance has sometimes been taken improper advantage of, and that others have sought to advance their frontiers or stake out claims while we have held our hand. We do not intend to look on at this for ever, for if we did we might find that the whole of our territory would be taken from us. At any rate, we feel that under present circumstances a large reserve of liquid resources may prove to be the most potent argument for a conclusion which will give us the position to which we are entitled. (Hear, hear.)

#### DIFFICULTY OF STABILIZING DIVIDENDS

To return to the question of the stabilization of dividends, I think it is necessary to reiterate what I have often tried to establish in the past. The world's output of rayon yarn, which

was a comparatively small thing before the war, has been multiplied nearly six times since 1922, the first year of which I have comprehensive statistics, and now exceeds 400,000,000 lb. per annum, which is four times the world output of raw silk. All the time new discoveries have been made and technique has constantly been changing. Now it is idle to say that an industry in this condition of rapid growth and rapid change is not highly speculative in character, or to compare it with manufactures which have had a mature life of a hundred years or so. This being so, I repeat that it seems to me impossible to guarantee stabilized dividends without fitting them at an unduly low level.

No one regrets more than we do that the shares of our company have been made a gambling counter, but from the nature of the case we can neither guarantee a steady level of earnings nor immunity against occasional losses. It is, therefore, impossible to prevent fluctuations in the price of our shares, and no stabilization of dividends would stop this, for, after all, it is not the amount distributed but the amount earned and the value of the assets which are the paramount factors in determining the true value of a share—(hear, hear)—coupled, of course, with the view taken of future prospects; and of these we have always endeavoured to give you the most sober and carefully balanced estimate.

#### EXPECTATIONS FOR 1930

Now, what I have said cannot have been very encouraging, and may perhaps have seemed rather involved, as I have touched on so many problems; I will therefore endeavour to give you a summarized view of our expectations for 1930. I must ask you to note that I am not able to take into account the effects of a possible economic world crisis which some people think we may have to face before long. Certainly it is true that there must be underlying causes for the general depression which is affecting the whole of European trade to-day, and it is equally certain that these general causes are beyond the control of those who are directing this industry.

Leaving this out of account, the probabilities seem to be as follows. At the best it hardly seems likely that we shall avoid some further diminution of our English profit this year. In America also there seems reason to fear a shrinkage, though not to anything like the same extent as we are threatened with here if the duties are abolished. On the Continent no considerable profits are to be looked for at an early date. On the other hand, it is most unlikely that we shall have to face a writing down of assets on any scale comparable with what has recently occurred. With these views before you you will no doubt be able to grasp the possibilities and probabilities as well as we can do ourselves.

Now I have kept you a long time; so I will not go through the balance sheet item by item. It is made out in the new form required by the Companies Act, and is quite easy to understand, and after what I have said I hardly think that any more detailed explanations are necessary.

I will ask the deputy-chairman, Mr. Stanley Bourne, to second the resolution. (Cheers.)

Mr. Stanley Bourne (deputy-chairman) seconded the resolution. The Chairman then invited questions.

#### SHAREHOLDERS' QUESTIONS

Mr. D. A. Thomas said that he had written to the directors asking for certain information, but had been unable to obtain it. He considered that all the shareholders had a right to obtain information regarding their undertaking, in order that they might get an idea of what the future of the company would be. He had also asked for permission to go over the company's works at Wolverhampton and Coventry, but had been refused that permission. When he was in America he had been allowed to go over many works, and he thought that he ought to have the same privilege in this country. He understood that about half their dividends came from the profits of the Viscose Corporation in America. He would like to know whether that was correct.

Mr. Savory.—I should like to ask what is to-day's market value of the company's investments in Government securities at present standing in the balance sheet at £9,810,882. I ask this because in 1921 the company held £4,000,000 in Government stocks, which were valued at the low market price then ruling, when War Loan was quoted about 82 and Conversion Three-and-a-Half per Cents. about 62; apparently these stocks are still valued at these prices. If this is the case, I respectfully suggest that, when so much has this year been written out of profits of the value of the Continental investments, our holding in gilt-edged securities might have been written up to to-day's market value.

#### THE AMERICAN VISCOSE CORPORATION

I should also like to ask what profit was made last year by the American Viscose Corporation. In asking this question I am fully aware that the same question has been put to you at previous meetings, but you have informed us that it is not in the interest of the shareholders that the information should be given. In view of the fact, however, that this information is public property in America, I cannot see why

the English shareholders should not also be told. In the Senate at Washington last month Senator Wheeler read out the profits of the Viscose Company for the three years, 1926, 1927 and 1928, and he gave them as \$27,609,060, \$29,051,180 and \$31,645,901. It appears to me that when all the depressing factors are brought forward the shareholder should be given some better idea as to the value of the American investment, as otherwise many English shareholders are scared out of their holdings owing to their not having this information.

I notice that investments in and advances to subsidiary companies this year are valued at £18,363,758, whereas at the end of 1927, and also, I believe, last year, the American Viscose Corporation alone was valued at £18,557,248. May we take it that the American Viscose Corporation has now redeemed the balance of its Preferred capital, or have you written down the value of this investment?

May I suggest that this year, if profits are sufficient, instead of a sum being placed to the reserve fund, the directors start a dividend equalization fund? Your dividend policy seems to be something like a switchback railway, and if you could set aside sums to a dividend equalization fund, so that when you increase the dividend shareholders can feel satisfied that the increased dividend will be maintained in the future, it would greatly benefit them and would also remove the Ordinary shares from the speculative category into which they have been brought by the dividend policy.

Mr. Mason said that he would like to draw attention to the item of "Balance for the year, including interest and dividends on investments and after charging depreciation of buildings, plant, etc., and expenses of management, and providing for contingencies." He would like to have that item analyzed in order that the accounts might be more intelligible. With regard to the item of investments, the directors knew what their value was, but that item was no help to him in forming an opinion of what his shares were worth. He knew he would be told that it was not in the interests of shareholders that such information should be disclosed, but he considered that that was a completely worn-out tale, and he was tired of it.

#### CONFIDENCE IN THE BOARD

He had much faith in the ability of the chairman and his co-directors. They had been through a very trying year, and it was highly probable that they had still further troubles ahead, but he had not the slightest doubt that they would emerge from them triumphantly. His fervent wish was that the chairman and his colleagues might have good health and then he was convinced that things would be all right with the company.

He would like to know whether they had paid a visit to the Chancellor of the Exchequer to explain their views as to the effect of a removal of the silk duties. In his (the speaker's) opinion, such removal would be madness. (Hear, hear.)

Mr. Disney asked whether it would be possible for the meeting to pass a resolution protesting against the possible withdrawal of the silk duties.

Mr. Price said that the chairman had referred to severe price-cutting which was taking place between the company and its competitors. He would like to know what the policy of the board was in that matter. Was it feasible to open negotiations with their competitors and arrange something in the nature of stabilization of prices? He understood that many other companies were agreeable to adopting that course, and he believed that the position was that it only needed the goodwill of Courtaulds to bring about such a state of affairs. Surely it would be beneficial to every one concerned?

#### RETAIL TRADE

Mr. Rumbold said that he would like to say a few words with regard to the retail trade. The value of the goodwill of the name of Courtauld was enormous, but he did not think that much use was being made of it so far as the customer was concerned. In fact, he thought that that goodwill was being depreciated. When ladies went into a shop and asked for artificial silk they got it; but if they asked whether it was Courtaulds' no one could tell them whether it was or not. (Hear, hear.)

It was true that Courtaulds did advertise in certain papers certain names of their products, but the name of Courtaulds did not appear. He wished that steps might be taken to advertise the name of the company to a greater extent.

Mr. Howard, supporting the previous speaker, said that since the last meeting he had consulted upwards of 1,000 ladies, and they had all told him that they had been unable to obtain Courtaulds' goods. He would suggest that some easily remembered name should be adopted for their products, as was the case with some of their competitors.

Mr. Morris said that he thought that a good deal of the falling off in the company's profits was accounted for by the fact that acetate silk was to a very great extent interfering with the sale of viscose, and he would like to know whether the manufacturer of the company's acetate silk, which had recently been commenced, was giving satisfaction. He regretted that Courtaulds had not recognized the possibilities and potentialities of acetate silk six or seven years ago, when they would not have had anything like the competition which they were meeting to-day.

He had seen it stated publicly in print that Courtaulds

were no longer the largest manufacturers in Great Britain in regard to length, weight or quality of output, and he would like to know whether that was true or whether the company still remained the premier company.

#### CHAIRMAN'S REPLY

The Chairman.—If there are no other questions I will try to answer those which have already been put. Mr. Thomas wants to know whether he can visit our English works. Without knowing whether Mr. Thomas has any direct business connexion with us I cannot answer that; but our rule is that no one visits our works unless they have business to do there. It may seem hard, but when you think that we have 70,000 shareholders how can we possibly prevent all kinds of people going into our works and picking up information if we allow any shareholder to go? (Hear, hear.) When Mr. Thomas goes to America he goes as a stranger, and I suppose with credentials and introductions, and gets shown their works. I venture to say that no works in America would allow 70,000 shareholders to go through. (Hear, hear.) Mr. Thomas also asked some other questions about the American company which were also asked by Mr. Savory. Mr. Savory asked one thing about the market value of our Government securities. We have always stated on our balance-sheet, I think, that these securities are valued either at or under cost, whichever is the lower. We do not write them up, and we do not write them down unless they go below what they stand at in our books. These Government securities some time ago did hold a large hidden reserve, but there has been a large fall in Government securities, as in everything else, and although there is still a small surplus in that figure it is nothing like what it was a year or two ago. However, they are still somewhat above to-day's market price.

Then Mr. Savory wants to know a good deal about the American Viscose Corporation's figures, and so on, and quotes some figures given by Senator Wheeler in the Senate. Those figures I have seen myself, and I have examined them. They are only an estimate, and I must tell you that they are extremely inaccurate. They are miles from the truth in most respects, and I believe they were challenged by a republican Senator on the other side. Senator Wheeler made some fantastic statement about the cost price of viscose yarn which were not, I suppose, 50 per cent. or 100 per cent. within the truth. His other figures are absolutely valueless for anyone who wants to form any idea of the profit.

#### VALUE OF AMERICAN INVESTMENTS

As to the valuation we place upon the American investments, two years ago we stated the figure at which we valued them. I think it was £18,500,000. That was stated by us in our report, I believe. Since then the Preferred stock has been sold, and since then the Canadian Company has been incorporated. Those, however, are relatively small things. The vast proportion of that figure—perhaps 80 per cent. or 90 per cent.—is still accounted for by the American shares. They have not been written down. The American ordinary stock we hold stands at the same value to-day as it did two years ago. I might perhaps refer a little to this question that we always get—this hoary question—about the American investments, and I am afraid that some of my answer will also be hoary. I should like to say that we do not resent this question. It is perfectly natural that shareholders should want to know all they can about their investments, and I must ask you to believe that we fully realize our responsibility in administering this large investment for you. But we are still of opinion that it is to your best interests to withhold financial details. (Hear, hear.) I think we can also maintain that the past history of the American investments justifies this.

It would be perfectly easy for us to give you the whole of the figures, and it would be pleasant for us to do it here because it would put a stop to this distrust and also reduce our load of responsibility. At the same time it would be utterly wrong for us to do so from a business point of view. Very many people, especially our competitors, would give a great deal to know these figures, and when they got them you may be quite sure they would not use them to our advantage. None of our important competitors issues figures which will tell you anything at all. We are always examining their balance-sheets, and would only like to know. No single company of any importance gives the information you wish us to give. Most of those companies are linked up with other companies. They are subsidiaries of other companies. Many of them are private companies. There are no reliable statistics going about or figures to be got from balance-sheets at all; and, of course, they do not publish their profits. If we gave away all you ask for it would simply amount to giving away the plan of your defences to the enemy. I must adhere to our previous practice of not giving any figures. At the same time I might refer to one or two previous statements I have given, which may help you a little. Mr. Thomas was not quite right. I said that much more than half our profit this year came from America, which is the fact.

#### AMERICAN RESERVES

Then as to the American reserves, some people think they have enormous, fantastic reserves in America. I think that at a previous meeting I stated that the policy of the American directors in regard to reserves was just about on a par with our policy here. You may infer what they put to reserve from what we



consider reasonable in their circumstances—and you know what we do. (Laughter.) At the same time, I do not want you to think there is any mysterious hidden treasure here. The reserves, we believe, are what are reasonable for a company in that position. Business is business on both sides of the Atlantic and not a fairy tale anywhere.

Another thing: we stated when we last re-valued the American assets that the valuation we put on the shares was fully covered by our share of the solid assets. That means that there is no water in them, and I think we stated that there was a little bit to spare. (Laughter.) I would like you to understand that there is nothing extraordinary there. The position is the same to-day. I think this ought to enable you to form some kind of view as to the worth of these investments, but I cannot give you any more detailed figures.

Mr. Savory also said, though I cannot agree with him, that our dividend policy has been mainly responsible for the speculation in our shares. The opportunity for speculation is given by the fluctuation in profits, which we cannot stop. I think the responsibility for it probably lies with people whose interest it is to foster speculation; it certainly is not ours.

Mr. Mason said he could not make out from the balance-sheet what the profit was. On the first page of the report we state that the trading profit was £3,743,827, which, of course, is after payment of income-tax. I am much obliged to Mr. Mason for his kind expression of trust, and hope we shall continue to keep that trust. He asks if we have been to the Chancellor of the Exchequer. The answer is "No," because the Chancellor would not see us. (Laughter.) In all fairness, however, I must say that we have seen other Government officials; we have seen the Chancellor's Secretary, and, I believe, the Chancellor is fully acquainted with our views, although we were not allowed to state them to him in person.

Mr. Disney makes the interesting suggestion that this meeting should pass a resolution to the Chancellor, but I am afraid, knowing the Chancellor's temperament and political complexion, it would be of no use at all.

Mr. Price asks about price-cutting and negotiations. We continually negotiate about price-cutting, but perhaps Mr. Price will know what I mean when I say that we only negotiate with what we call solid people who have something to offer and who are likely to be an important factor in the business. (Hear, hear.)

Mr. Rumbold raises very interesting questions about Courtaulds' name and goodwill in the retail trade. He is there touching on questions which I personally do not know much about, because I am not on the commercial side of the business, but I think I can say this: this interesting and difficult question continually has our attention.

#### POLICY

The next shareholder who spoke—Mr. Howard—compared our policy with the British Celanese company's policy. There are various things one could say about that. Our biggest customers are the wholesale trade who are manufacturers of stockings and all kinds of things, and even as far as our woven goods are concerned we send them to the wholesale and do not deal with the retail direct. Those manufacturers mostly have their own trade marks and goodwill, and the most suicidal thing we could do would be to alienate them. We have to consider that first and whether we can with them evolve a policy of advertising which will bring our name forward without hurting their interests. We have to consider their interests first. We are investigating the question of special trade-marks and so on.

A Shareholder.—May I suggest that when you actually go into the retail trade you should do it thoroughly?

The Chairman.—But we are not in the retail trade. I might point out that a very small percentage of our rayon yarn is used by our own weaving branch, and some of those goods are advertised, but by far the bigger part is sold by us in the form of yarn and always goes through the hands of other manufacturers.

Mr. Howard.—Could you possibly suggest that it might be for the advantage of the company if the wholesalers had the word "Courtaulds" on their advertised goods? (Hear, hear.)

The Chairman.—I will not say more than that is the kind of question we have been investigating recently. Mr. Howard says: "Why not follow Celanese policy?"—but as to following their policy, would you like us to follow their policy in making profits? (Laughter.)

The resolution was then put to the meeting and carried unanimously.

The Chairman referred to the appointment to the board of Mr. John Coldbrook Hanbury-Williams and moved his election as a director. Mr. Hanbury-Williams, he said, had youth, strength, and energy, and they expected him to be of great assistance to them on the commercial side.

Mr. S. Bourne (deputy-chairman) seconded the resolution, and it was unanimously adopted.

The Chairman then moved that Mr. S. Bourne, Mr. S. A. Courtauld, and Sir Thomas P. Latham, Bt., be re-elected directors.

Mr. G. J. Bell seconded the motion, which was unanimously approved.

On the motion of Mr. L. Denny, seconded by Mr. H. P. Lawson, Messrs. W. Elles-Hill and Co. and Messrs. Price, Waterhouse and Co. were reappointed joint auditors.

A vote of thanks to the chairman, directors, and staff concluded the proceedings.

## LAW LAND COMPANY

### NEGOTIATIONS FOR A NEW SITE

#### RENT ROLL INCREASED

The forty-seventh Annual General Meeting of the Law Land Co., Ltd., was held on Wednesday last at the offices of the company, 30 Norfolk Street, Strand, London, W.C., Col. Sir T. Courtenay T. Warner, Bt., C.B. (chairman of the company) presiding.

The secretary (Mr. H. H. Sparks) having read the notice convening the meeting and the report of the auditors, the chairman said:

It is customary on these occasions for you to allow me to take the Report as read, and I presume that this is the case on this occasion. Since you all have the accounts before you I will not go into them in any detail. They are, as you will see, highly satisfactory and show that the year's business has been particularly good. But before I leave the subject I should like to give you a few words of explanation with regard to that part of the Report which deals with the dividend proposal.

#### DIVIDEND AND BONUS

Out of the profits for the year 1928 you will recollect that the Ordinary Shareholders received 9 per cent., a cash bonus of 2 per cent., and a further bonus of two Preference Shares for every 100 Ordinary Shares held. Taking the then market price of the Preference Shares at about 15s., the total return received by the Ordinary Shareholders for that year was equal to something over 12½ per cent. This year, as you will see, we propose to pay the same dividend—9 per cent.—but the bonus takes the form of two Ordinary Shares for every 100 Ordinary Shares held, and, if we take the market value of the Ordinary Shares at, say, 35s., the return is about the same as that of the previous year, with, perhaps, a slight addition by way of saving in income tax. Our object in recommending this to you will, I think, be made clear a little later on.

Now with regard to our work in the past year, rents have slightly increased in spite of a very dull period in trade, and we do congratulate ourselves on having been able to obtain this result when we find that so many properties consisting of shops, offices, and residential flats in all parts of London are feeling the prolonged depression. We have continued to spend money, somewhat freely perhaps, on keeping all our properties in a first-class state of repair, but the money has been well spent. Experience in the past has proved to us the wisdom of this course and our methods have obtained for us a reputation throughout London which is invaluable. I believe that it is largely due to this that in such a lean year we have succeeded in keeping our property, to all intents and purposes, fully let.

#### LANCASTER PLACE

We have for some time past been on the lookout for a building scheme which would provide an investment for our savings and at the same time increase the scope of our operations, and I am in great hopes we have discovered it. Our negotiations with the Duchy of Lancaster for a site in Lancaster Place are well advanced and I have every reason to believe that they will have a favourable issue. The site has exceptional advantages in relation to light and air, and its position is equal to any in Central London. It has the additional attraction of being close to the company's headquarters and other office property, and is peculiarly adapted for the erection of a really fine block of office and shop property. I hope it will be not only a remunerative investment to the company, but an ornament to London and to one of the great main arteries between north and south.

I hope when we meet next year that we shall actually be engaged in the construction of a building worthy of the site. It is early days to talk about the cost, but our preliminary estimate gives us reason to believe that this will not involve much, if any, increase of share capital. We think it prudent, however, to keep some of our spare cash in our coffers and continue our practice of paying a part, if not the whole, of our bonus in shares instead of cash, and, as you have already been informed, we propose to adopt this principle on the present occasion.

#### APPRECIATION OF STAFF

This is, I think, all that I can tell you of our achievements in the past year and our proposals in the future.

It is always my pleasure on these occasions to express our appreciation of all that the staff have done to achieve the results which we have placed before you, and on this occasion, without singling out any particular department, I once more wish to express the gratitude of the directors to all those who have worked so hard and so loyally and with such success, and with this I am sure the Shareholders would like to associate themselves.

The report and accounts were unanimously adopted.

## Miscellaneous

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## Personal

**L** AST November we were asked to assist a family. Husband in hospital for several months but sent home suffering from incurable disease and died beginning of this month. Widow hopes soon to get work to support two children (15 and 6), but is not yet fit to seek a post. They now have only the one child's earnings to live upon. Gifts for assistance meanwhile to Preb. Carlile, "Special Cases," The Church Army, 55 Bryanston St., W.1.

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St. Paul, in the County of London, and Printed by HERBERT REICH, LTD., 43 Belvedere Road, S.E.1; Saturday, March 15, 1930